

*Inquiries of the Ministry*VIET NAM—REQUEST BY U.S. FOR
MILITARY AID

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, may I put a further question to the Prime Minister. In view of the statement over the week end by Secretary of State Dean Rusk requesting various European governments to give military aid to the United States in Viet Nam, has any similar request been made at any time to the Canadian government and has the Canadian government made it abundantly clear to the United States government that apart from our membership in the International Control Commission Canada would not be prepared to supply troops in Viet Nam except as part of a peace keeping force under the United Nations?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that Mr. Rusk over the week end spoke in exactly the terms that my hon. friend has used. But irrespective of that, I can assure him that no such request has been made to the Canadian government, and I believe that the matter did not come up at the recent NATO meeting in terms of a request for military aid. I can also assure him that there is no possibility of military aid being sent by Canada to Viet Nam.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

SHIPBUILDING

INQUIRY AS TO APPLICATION OF
SUBSIDY PAYMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Has the government given any consideration to changing its decision regarding the subsidy to shipbuilding, which decision discriminates against that part of this program which is carried on by provincial governments?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this question should not be directed to me but to one of my colleagues, and probably the appropriate minister to reply would be the Minister of Transport.

Mr. Winch: I hope it will be a better answer than he gave me on Friday.

Mr. Thompson: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Transport answer that question?

Mr. Nielsen: I doubt it.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): I am sorry that I did not hear the hon.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

gentleman's question. If he could repeat it, I will endeavour to answer it.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, the question is simply this. Has the government given further consideration to reversing its discriminatory decision not to subsidize that part of the shipbuilding industry which is carried on under provincial government sponsorship?

Mr. Diefenbaker: One good turn deserves another.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, though the government's policy was announced before the opening of the session, it will have to be brought before parliament, and I would think the government would take account of any reasonable representations which might be made with respect to this policy from any authoritative source.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: The purpose, of course, of the subsidies—as hon. gentlemen opposite know very well, since they were instituted originally when hon. gentlemen opposite were in office—is to assist the shipbuilding industry, not to provide subsidies to shipping. That factor naturally would have to be taken into account in any consideration that might be given.

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): I should like to ask a supplementary question of the Prime Minister. Has he received a telegram from the associated boards of trade of Vancouver Island protesting the policy announced in the Throne Speech? If so, what was the nature of his reply to this telegram?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I would be glad to look into that. It is my impression, Mr. Speaker, that I have received that telegram, but I should like to check on that and as to any reply that may have been sent.

Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich): I should like to ask the Minister of Transport whether the government of British Columbia or any other provincial government has made representations to the federal government with regard to excluding provincial governments from the shipbuilding subsidy.

Mr. Pickersgill: I have not, to the best of my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, received any direct representations. I would be concealing information from the house if I did not say that I read the very complimentary reference to me attributed to Premier Bennett by the newspapers of British Columbia.