

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Pickersgill:—what more important function has parliament than the voting of supply?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not doubt the importance of the function. I am simply querying some of the expressions that have been used.

Mr. Nowlan: We have been telling you that for months.

THE SENATE

INQUIRY AS TO APPOINTMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): I should like to ask the Prime Minister if he has made or is considering making today any series of appointments to the other place, or to the judiciary.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, every day is a day for such appointments.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): May I ask a supplementary question. Can the Prime Minister say whether any appointments have been approved by His Excellency the Governor General which have not been announced to the public?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I cannot say at the moment if they have not been announced. All the appointments that have been made have received the attention of the Governor General either yesterday or today. I know the hon. gentleman has been in touch with the privy council office regularly—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Pickersgill: I rise on a question of privilege arising out of the Prime Minister's observation.

Mr. Fulton: Anything wrong with that?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, there is, and that is precisely why I am raising a question of privilege. It arises out of the Prime Minister's observation. It is well known to hon. members that two appointments were made to the other place before the last election and kept secret by this government, thus dragging the crown into politics.

Mr. Speaker: Order. That is not a question of privilege which the hon. member is putting forward.

TRANSPORT

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY—SUGGESTED COMPULSORY PILOTAGE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Hubert Badanai (Fort William): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Trans-
[Mr. Pickersgill.]

port. Has he received a request for compulsory pilotage on all ships passing through the St. Lawrence seaway?

Hon. Leon Balcer (Minister of Transport): I have not seen such a request. However, I will investigate and I will be pleased to answer my hon. friend.

Mr. Badanai: May I ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the government intend to take any action about this request?

Mr. Balcer: The government has appointed a royal commission on pilotage which will investigate the whole matter from coast to coast in Canada.

(Translation):

SOULANGES CANAL—TRANSFER TO QUEBEC

On the orders of the day:

Mr. P.-A. Boutin (Dorchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour—

Mr. Speaker: I recognized the hon. member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges. He will ask his question and then the hon. member for Dorchester will state his.

Mr. Marcel Bourbonnais (Vaudreuil-Soulanges): Could the Minister of Transport tell the house whether the federal government received an answer from the Quebec provincial government following the order in council passed last year to transfer the Soulanges canal to the Quebec provincial government?

Hon. Leon Balcer (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we did not hear from the provincial government on that matter.

Mr. Speaker: I am very sorry I did not have time to hear that question but surely it should have been placed on the order paper.

(Text):

SECRETARY OF STATE

BRITISH COLUMBIA—REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): I should like to direct to the Prime Minister a question which is of some urgency. Can he advise the house when he is going to fill the four vacancies for returning officers in British Columbia?

Mr. Speaker: Order. This is a question which I think should go on the order paper. It is a matter of detail.

Mr. Winch: Will there be time for the returning officers to be appointed?