

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Macquarrie: May I ask whether it is the view of the government of Canada that the government of France has the right to arrest ships on the high seas in these circumstances?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is asking for a legal interpretation and I doubt that the question is in order.

* * *

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. I am interested in what compels Marc Lalonde, the right hon. gentleman's principal private secretary, to make the rounds of *Time Magazine* and the *Toronto Sun* and suggest by letter and interview that these journals have been unduly critical of the right hon. gentleman.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Bell: Explain.

Mr. Fairweather: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I think the country is entitled to know whether the Prime Minister's concept of democracy is so fragile that it only accepts that rare remnant of comment that is favourable.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL
CONFERENCES—POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

Last June 19, the Health Minister of the Province of Quebec stated at the Canadian Welfare Conference that it was imperative to renew negotiations about the constitution.

Would the Prime Minister tell the House if, on the one hand, the Premier of Quebec has advised him of such a wish and, on the other hand, if he himself is ready to renew these negotiations?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on this subject, I have always said to whoever wanted to hear that the last series of constitutional conferences was not successful because the Province of Quebec did not agree with all the other provinces and the federal government. If this province wants to renew constitutional debates, it should do so from a clear, definite and known position and I hope that there would be then some chance of success.

[Mr. St. Pierre.]

[English]

INDUSTRY

RECOMMENDATIONS OF TEXTILE AND CLOTHING
BOARD RESPECTING CERTAIN YARNS AND FABRICS

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Has the minister received recommendations from the Textile and Clothing Board regarding its investigation into three important areas of Canada's foreign trade, acrylic yarns for use in machine knitting operations, double knit and warp knit fabrics, and broad woven polyester filament fabrics? If so, will he give the House the substance of these recommendations and his reaction to them?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hope the minister can reply to that question briefly. Normally the answer ought to be given by way of a statement on motions. The minister will be recognized for the purpose of giving a brief answer.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, if my memory serves me well, I have received reports on the first two items mentioned. These reports will be tabled in due course.

Mr. McIntosh: May I ask the minister what safeguards are provided by the minister to ensure that the operations of the board are not detrimental to the Canadian policy of freer world trade, a policy to which the minister so often gives lip service?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, it is very simple—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question, in those terms, is not in order. I believe the right hon. member for Prince Albert has a supplementary to the previous question.

* * *

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL
CONFERENCE

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Is he giving consideration now to the reconvening of a Canadian conference on the constitution? I should like to know what his position is because I seem to recall that all these problems were going to be solved under his regime.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not, as I said just a moment ago in answering the question of the hon. member for Joliette, giving consideration at this time to reconvening the constitutional conference, and I seem to recall, too, that back in the early sixties all these problems were going to be solved.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am amused because the Prime Minister is rewriting history. That statement is false.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!