

Inquiries of the Ministry

information. In addition to that we have our own authorities on board both the *Manhattan* and the *St. Laurent* who are accumulating a good deal of information on their own during the trip.

Mr. Nesbitt: A further supplementary. Will the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps I will allow the hon. member's supplementary, but we have reached the point in the question period when I have to warn hon. members that we are running short of time and should cut down on the supplementaries.

Mr. Nesbitt: I will be very brief, Your Honour. Will the minister table the information when it is received from the Humble Oil Company after the voyage is completed?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I suspect that will depend entirely on the nature of the information. If it is a matter of beneficial public information as opposed to something that might perhaps be advantageous to competitors or the like, it will be tabled to the extent that it is possible.

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. P. V. Noble (Grey-Simcoe): I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Because of his absence, I have checked the roster and I find that the Acting Minister is Mr. Martin. I ask the Prime Minister how questions are to be addressed to Mr. Martin?

AUDITOR GENERAL

DELAY OF LEGISLATION PENDING CONSIDERATION OF ALLEGATIONS BY PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): My question is for the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the Public Accounts Committee has referred the matter of allegations against the Auditor General to its steering committee for consideration, does the government intend to delay its proposed legislation until this consideration has been completed?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I will gladly take that into consideration, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Aiken: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the government intend to abolish the position of the Auditor General?

Mr. Trudeau: In no way, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Jamieson.]

[Later:]

ASSURANCE OF CONTINUANCE OF ROLE

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister in regard to the proposed legislation in connection with the Auditor General. Will the Prime Minister give every assurance to the House that there will not be any change in the role of Auditor General, that the role of the Auditor General will not be altered, thus affecting the non-partisan nature of that position and destroying the Public Accounts Committee?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there is indeed no intention on the part of the government to introduce any legislation which might affect the non-partisan character of the Auditor General.

Mr. Bell: A further supplementary question. Can we have every assurance that the Auditor General as such will not be removed to make way for some political hack, as has been—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

[Later:]

REDUCTION OF POWERS BY LEGISLATION

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question that is also supplementary to those asked by the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka of the Prime Minister. Is it the intention to introduce legislation to alter, reduce or change in any way the powers of the Auditor General?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker, but we would hope that there will be a clarification of his role, as understood by all parties.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to those asked about the Auditor General. Has there been any decision by the government to bring his salary in line with other increases in salary, or is he to be starved out?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Broadview.

Mr. McCleave: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I think I asked a question that was perfectly legitimate within the scheme of