

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

BURMA—REPORTED DETENTION OF
CANADIANS IN JAIL

On the orders of the day:

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs which I hope is not going to impose upon the house another marathon talkfest. I should like to ask the minister about the welfare of two young Canadians who are reported to have been detained in a Rangoon jail and kept incommunicado for five months. Is this report correct? If so what is the present position, and what assistance is the minister's department giving?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the department was notified on October 26 by the British embassy in Rangoon that Messrs. Lalonde and Pineault had been arrested in Rangoon. The department has not yet been informed of the outcome of the hearing which took place a short time ago. However, an officer from our high commissioner's office in Kuala Lumpur is now in Rangoon and will be looking into the matter. We have done everything we can and will continue to do everything we can.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Did the department receive from the parents of one of the young men in question the payment of a substantial sum to cover his passage home? If so, has this matter been acknowledged?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): This matter is now being discussed.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): As a former minister of justice the hon. member should know that it must be discussed with those *in loco parentis*. This is the procedure which is laid down. The matter must be discussed with the parents and it is now being discussed. No one should understand that better than one who was a former minister of justice.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, my inquiry is this. Did the department receive from the parents a substantial sum, and has that sum been acknowledged?

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Inquiries of the Ministry

NOVA SCOTIA

DISCUSSIONS RESPECTING CONTINUED
OPERATION OF STEEL PLANT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister, and with your permission may I emphasize the "acting". I should like to ask the minister whether the government has undertaken any negotiations with the province of Nova Scotia respecting the Sydney steel operation.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to answer that question for the Acting Prime Minister. The government has been in close touch with the government of Nova Scotia since this crisis developed. Yesterday the premier of Nova Scotia sent a communication to the Prime Minister indicating certain terms of settlement and arrangements that had been made between the government of Nova Scotia and the Dosco corporation. In the same communication he suggested that he would like to be in discussion with the Prime Minister, after the returns from London, about these matters. I would conclude, Mr. Speaker, that this whole matter will be the subject of discussion between the premier of Nova Scotia and the Prime Minister in the light of the agreement that has been reached.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): May I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare whether the federal government, at this time or at some time throughout these discussions, has given the government of Nova Scotia the assurance that the federal government will be prepared to accept a substantial part of the financial commitment that will be necessary to keep this plant open.

Mr. MacEachen: An assurance was given to the government of Nova Scotia with respect to a particular period of operation. I would conclude that any further period would be a matter for discussion.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It has now been established beyond a doubt that Nova Scotian members can put questions about Nova Scotia to the minister who comes from Nova Scotia, even though the subject matter of those questions may fall outside the purview of his department. I wish to ask the minister if he intends to impress on his colleagues that the federal government