

Inquiries of the Ministry

The same question was raised yesterday, I think it was, respecting the observance of the cease fire. There has been no change in the last two days. There is no information to substantiate press reports that some difficulty was encountered at a meeting yesterday between representatives of the two parties. The commission, of course, just arrived, and conditions in Laos are disturbed with the result that communication difficulties are bound to arise at first.

I think the hon. gentleman would have a rather full explanation if the house would agree to the printing as an appendix to *Hansard* of the message from the co-chairmen of the Geneva conference on Indo-China to the international commission for supervision and control in Laos, which sets forth fairly completely the situation as it is today.

Mr. Speaker: Is the house agreeable that this document be printed as an appendix to *Hansard*.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: For text of document referred to above, see appendix "A".*]

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): May I ask the Prime Minister a question with regard to the Geneva conference which is scheduled to open on May 12. In view of the reported failure thus far to arrive at a complete cease fire in Laos, according to news received at 9 o'clock over the radio, will the Prime Minister say if Canada takes the same position as that taken by the United Kingdom and the United States, namely that there will be difficulty on the part of those countries with regard to their participation in the conference until such time as a cease fire has been determined?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman asked me a question yesterday as to whether the commission's functions other than supervision of the cease fire had been determined. In so far as the particular observation he now makes is concerned, may I say that our stand has been made very clear. After the conclusion of an agreement between the belligerent parties in Laos on questions connected with the cease fire, the commission should exercise control over the execution of this agreement. Those are the words in the document which has just been tabled as an appendix to *Hansard*.

Furthermore, as to the functions which the international commission for supervision and control in Laos will carry out on the completion of the first stage of the work, the determination of these functions falls within the competence of the international conference on Laos which will be held in Geneva beginning on May 12.

[*Mr. Diefenbaker.*]

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I thank the Prime Minister for answering my question of yesterday, but obviously I was not clear enough in the question I asked this morning. My question this morning had to do with what would be the attitude of Canada with regard to participation in this conference on May 12 in Geneva if the cease fire has not been determined, particularly in the light of the announcement by the United Kingdom that it would not attend the conference unless a cease fire had been determined by the international supervisory commission.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Canada will be represented at the opening of the conference. The stand that she will take will be announced at that time.

THE CENSUS

EGLINTON RIDING—POLITICAL AFFILIATION
OF COMMISSIONERS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. R. Garland (Nipissing): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance, based on a press report in today's *Globe and Mail*, and ask him whether it is true that five census commissioners appointed in the riding of Eglinton are officers of the local Progressive Conservative Association.

An hon. Member: Who do you think they would be?

Another hon. Member: Now we know.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): I have not seen the article in question, Mr. Speaker. I do not know about the situation raised by the question as to all the persons concerned, but I can assure him that they are all very estimable citizens.

Mr. Garland: I have a supplementary question. In view of the tens of thousands of unemployed persons in the Toronto area, does he not think that more prudent choices could have been made?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think the hon. member is now presenting a point of view rather than asking a question. I recognize the hon. member for Port Arthur.

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): My question is a supplementary one on this topic, but I want to go to the gentleman who is looking after the matter, namely the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I wonder if the parliamentary secretary would say whether any specific census district has been set up so that work