

Inquiries of the Ministry

shown by the house in the Far East, could the Prime Minister give some indication what topics will be discussed during that part of his parliamentary secretary's tour?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the scope and nature of the visit of my parliamentary secretary to the Far East has been greatly exaggerated in the press statement which I saw this morning. He was invited some time ago to visit Taiwan by the government of Taiwan and accepted that invitation with my approval because it was considered useful to have a Canadian government representative visit there. While in the Far East he will take advantage of the opportunity to visit two or three other countries in Asia and then he will return to Canada.

LABOUR CONDITIONS**NOVA SCOTIA—TRANSFER OF COAL OPERATIONS TO CROWN CORPORATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister a question arising out of press reports of certain discussions held in Nova Scotia. I should like to ask the right hon. gentleman whether the government is now prepared to consider extending the area of operations of the proposed crown corporation in Nova Scotia to take over all possible operations, including steel plants in Nova Scotia?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to add anything to what I said on this matter a week or so ago, when I replied to a similar question that it is not our intention at the present time to extend the field of operations of this corporation.

Mr. Lewis: A supplementary question. May I ask the Prime Minister whether it is not the view of the government of Nova Scotia that this extension of the authority of the corporation should be made; and is it not advisable to do it now while negotiations with the province and DOSCO are under way?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This question is argumentative.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the answer the Prime Minister has just given to the hon. member for York South, may I ask the Prime Minister whether he would look at the previous answer given

to this question to see if there is not a clear indication in that answer that the government was considering taking over steel plants? All the Prime Minister needs to do is to check his own answer.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that can be read into my previous answer, which I will be glad to look into again.

[Later:]

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, my question is actually one of privilege arising from the Prime Minister's answer to the hon. member for York South, his answer to my supplementary question, and the implication that something was being read into his answers that was not there. To substantiate my question of privilege with respect to the fact—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I wonder if the hon. member might raise his question of privilege when the question period has expired. I am afraid we might use up the time that is required by hon. members who want to ask questions.

[Later:]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton South on a question of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, the question I wish to bring to your attention arose from the answer given by the Prime Minister to the hon. member for York South, his answer to my supplementary question, and the implication that hon. members were reading something into his answers which was not there.

For the benefit of the house, and particularly for the benefit of the Prime Minister, I would direct attention to *Hansard* for January 12, 1967, at page 11692, second column, where my question to the Prime Minister was recorded as follows:

Would the right hon. gentleman consider the purchase of DOSCO as a unit in order to maintain the steel operation where it now is, rather than provide a springboard for the transfer to Quebec?

The Prime Minister's answer to me was:

This is a far reaching question involving government intervention in industry, and one which I certainly do not wish to answer on the orders of the day. It is too important to deal with in this way. There will be an opportunity to discuss this whole matter before long in connection with legislation, or even earlier. This will be one of the aspects of the question that will be considered.

The Prime Minister has referred to the fact that I have taken certain inferences from