

*Inquiries of the Ministry***NATIONAL GALLERY****REPORTED INTENTION TO PURCHASE \$6 MILLION PICTURE**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State. Can the minister tell us about the \$6 million picture that her department is reported to be purchasing for the National Gallery?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): There was no such report at all. The report, as I understand it, was that I said I should like to have such a picture purchased as a standard of excellence at which all Canadians might aim for their artistic lives. It was made very clear that this was my view. It has never been discussed with my colleagues, most notably the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance. I was very happy to mention it in order to try to obtain the reaction of those present, which was very enthusiastic. I also wanted—

Mr. Starr: How about raising old age pensions?

Miss LaMarsh: —to obtain the reaction of the rest of the country. I know my hon. friend who is now speaking, the former minister of labour, while he was in office informed Canadians that that government did not have any interest in the National Gallery. However, we are interested in it.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether any discussions have taken place with regard to the Hirschorn art collection which this gentleman brought together as a result of the wealth he earned in Canada. Has there been any suggestion that this art collection should be made available to Canada rather than transported out of Canada to the United States.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The subject to which the right hon. Leader of the Opposition refers is not within my immediate knowledge, and I do not know to what extent it could be urgent. Perhaps the right hon. gentleman might indicate in what way it is, so I might allow the question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I cannot imagine anything more urgent than the report that within three or four days this is going to take place. I do not know of any other opportunity of referring to the matter. We may lose this art collection, unless of course it is impossible for Canada to secure it in any way.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I have had no discussions with Mr. Hirschorn on this matter. I understand from what I have read that these pictures are not at the moment in Canada but are in the United States, although I know he has had pictures in Canada. I am sure we would welcome any donation to the National Gallery which might save us \$6 million, if Mr. Hirschorn would find it possible to have some of his pictures donated. In fairness to him, in view of what the right hon. gentleman has said, I think it should be noted that Mr. Hirschorn made a good deal of his money in the United States, as well as some of it in Canada.

Mr. Starr: Tell him to leave half the pictures, then.

Miss LaMarsh: I might also give some information to the right hon. gentleman in this connection. I checked on this matter this morning, and I am informed that in 1958 the then directors of the gallery, Dr. Jarvis and Dr. Hubbard, did have some conversations with Mr. Hirschorn with respect to his collection, which I understand has always been in the United States although it has been on loan to us and we did have a Durer Sketch at one time. The indication then was that the owner of these art works intended to build himself a gallery in New York similar to the Guggenheim gallery to house his own very massive collection.

There has been no indication since 1958 that he has changed his mind. In fact we are informed that the agreement between the President of the United States and this gentleman will involve an investment of several million dollars by the United States government for the construction of a new museum expressly for that purpose.

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): May I ask a supplementary question arising out of the answer of the Secretary of State. I wonder if this is one of the situations in which the Minister of Finance would be disposed to yield to pressure?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): This is a hypothetical question.

FISHERIES**LAKE ERIE—REQUEST FOR STABILIZATION OF PRICES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Jack Roxburgh (Norfolk): I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries. With