

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Transport see no distinction between a member of the opposition going out to make a comment on the behavior of a minister in the house, and a minister of the Crown making a recording several days before an official announcement which might have a very prejudicial effect upon the people of this country?

Mr. Hellyer: I believe there is, indeed, a difference but I think absents oneself from the house without leave is mentioned in the rules. I was surprised my hon. friend did not have the patience to wait—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Woolliams: I wonder whether I might rise on a question of privilege. I realize this government is becoming more dictatorial every day, but I did not know I had to ask special leave from the Minister of Transport, who has leaked a secret to the nation. If he recognized his responsibility he would realize that he is now in breach of the oath he took as Privy Councillor of this nation.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Greenwood.

Mr. Lewis: Eldon, he does not deserve this attention.

An hon. Member: Who—the hon. member for Greenwood?

NATIONAL DEFENCE**A.B.M. SYSTEM—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I will try to change the subject by directing a question to the Minister of National Defence. Would he be prepared to bring before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence soon after the Easter recess the evidence available to the government on the proposed installation of the anti-ballistic missile system in the United States and any possible Canadian involvement in the system?

Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I do not think there would be any objection on our part to a comprehensive briefing that could be held in camera. I have no objection to that. The

member seems to think we have written memoranda or an exchange of printed material, which we do not have. We have at the technical level exchanged views and technical data that we can translate into a briefing for the committee. I think that would be agreeable to me.

Mr. Brewin: I should like to ask the minister whether there is material of an unclassified nature which was made available either in writing or orally to the government and which could properly be put before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence?

Mr. Cadieux (Labelle): I have no objection to trying to sort this out. Certainly part of the material could be made public but if there is to be an extensive briefing there are a number of things which would be considered to be classified. Whichever approach is preferable can be followed.

INDUSTRY**DEVCO—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF MINERS**

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question for the Prime Minister is one to which I have been seeking an answer now for some time, including yesterday. Will the Prime Minister indicate whether the government endorses the compulsory retirement at age 60 of employees of Devco, a crown corporation?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think this question would have to be asked of the minister responsible for Devco.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to draw to the attention of the Prime Minister that this question goes back to early last fall and has been asked several times within the last two weeks. It was asked again yesterday. According to the Prime Minister's roster the minister was supposed to have been here to answer the question yesterday. Devco has taken action to retire crown corporation employees compulsorily at age 60. Surely the Prime Minister as leader of the government should know whether it is government policy to retire employees compulsorily at age 60. Would he give consideration to this question?

Mr. Trudeau: I will give consideration to that question, Mr. Speaker.