

Inquiries of the Ministry

said I have no reason to believe that these talks would take place within days or weeks, as he suggested. I would hope that to be the case.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. gentleman mentioned that the Canadian representative did not have the same view as to precision held by U Thant as to the cessation of bombing by the United States being followed immediately by meetings at the conference table, does he have any idea how far North Viet Nam indicated it was prepared to go?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, quite recently we have been told that they would enter into talks, but we have no precision as to when these talks would take place.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether, in light of the statement by the right hon. member for Prince Albert and the minister's reply, and in view of the tremendous urgency of this matter and the possibility of further escalation of the war, the time has not come for the Canadian government to take the initiative in asking that the whole matter be discussed before the Security Council again, before the situation gets worse?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, for many months the Canadian government has taken the position that the question of the war in Viet Nam was one properly before the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Diefenbaker: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister imply that the United States attitude is that it will not give consideration to a cessation of bombing except on the basis of the so-called San Antonio declaration? Also, what has been Canada's view as expressed to the government of the United States on the basis of the Canadian ambassador's visit to North Viet Nam? Has Canada advised the United States that while it has not precise information it believes, on the basis of those discussions which have taken place, that a cessation of bombing would permit immediate consultation and consideration at the conference table?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position has not been changed since the declaration I made in the general assembly in September, when I said there should be a cessation of the bombing. We could not

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

guarantee what the results would be, but we believed this would be a new situation and we saw no other way of bringing about meaningful discussions. That continues to be the position of the Canadian government.

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Roger-E. Régimbal (Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact that the Minister of Justice, as recorded on page 7038 of *Hansard*, has likened the authority of the Canada Year Book to that of the People's Almanac, or Almanach Beauchemin, does the minister intend to cancel publication of the Canada Year Book?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

INDUSTRY

SYDNEY, N.S.—ADDITIONAL FEDERAL ASSISTANCE RESPECTING STEEL PLANT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister may I direct my question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who I understand is a member of the cabinet committee dealing with what we think is the most important situation to arise for some years, namely the steel crisis in Nova Scotia. May I ask the hon. gentleman whether he is in a position today to give hon. members a progress report as to what financial assistance is going to be available from the federal government to the province of Nova Scotia in this most serious situation.

Hon. Robert Winters (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, a letter is in the course of preparation in reply to one Premier Smith wrote to the Prime Minister a few days ago. It will be dispatched, I should think, within the next day or two. It contains the government's present position.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce with reference to questions posed by the hon. member for Grey North and myself some days ago with regard to the dumping of steel. At that time the minister said:

I understand that a report has been prepared. I am not familiar with the exact details of the report, but perhaps I could familiarize myself with it and answer a little later.