

*Inquiries of the Ministry***HOUSING****USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF MINISTERS IN
ADVERTISEMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. O. J. Godin (Nickel Belt): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works arising out of an advertisement that appeared in the *Sudbury Star* of February 17, a copy of which I have forwarded to him. Can the minister tell the house whether he has authorized the use of his photograph and that of the Prime Minister in an advertisement promoting a private enterprise to the detriment of other similar businesses in the area?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Unless the advertisement is a public advertisement I think the hon. member's question would be out of order.

Mr. Godin: I presume it may be the government.

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the hon. member is prepared to take the responsibility for asking a question based on an advertisement that is published by the minister, I would then permit the question as being within his administrative responsibility, but if it is a private advertisement the hon. member has no right to bring it before the house.

TRANSPORT**P.G.E. RAILWAY—GOVERNMENT POLICY
RESPECTING SUBSIDIZATION**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. W. M. Benidickson (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Minister of Finance. Has the minister had his attention drawn to bill No. 15 of the legislature of the province of British Columbia, wherein it is stated that the federal government is expected to make a monetary grant in the amount of \$19,812,500 to subsidize the Pacific Great Eastern Railway Company? If the government has a policy in this respect, will the minister indicate whether or not it has previously been announced as government policy and, if so, whether a similar concession would be granted to any other province?

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should be aware that, following the proper course in that respect, a similar question has already been placed on the order paper by the hon. member for Vancouver East. It appears in *Votes and Proceedings* for yesterday. It is a starred question and will be answered tomorrow.

[Mr. Green.]

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, a very important question of privilege has been raised by the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River in his question. The legislature of a province has a bill before it which asserts that it is expected that a grant will be made by the federal government before we have been told anything about it in the house. Surely we are entitled to know whether this statement in the preamble to legislation of the provincial legislature is in fact a part of the policy of the government.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Winch: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I say—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I take it that the hon. member is raising as a question of privilege the absence of an answer to his question today. I am not sure that is a question of privilege; in fact I think it is not. Whether or not a question will be answered is in the discretion of the administration, and it is not customary to comment on the absence or inadequacy of an answer even as a matter of privilege.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, it was not the absence of an answer—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, there is a further point involved. It is whether, after an hon. member has followed the proper course of placing an involved question on the order paper, some other member should be permitted to come along, appropriate the question and ask for an early answer before the time has come for the answering of the starred question. The proper course will be followed in accordance with the rules of the house. Tomorrow is the day for answering starred questions, and I propose to regard this as the question of the hon. member for Vancouver East and to answer it tomorrow when you call for answers to starred questions.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, obviously I did not make clear the point I was seeking to make. I would not suggest that failure to answer a question until tomorrow was a question of privilege, but I was suggesting that when the government of a province introduces a bill in the legislature of that province purporting to commit the treasury of this country, this is a proper matter to be brought to the attention of the government in this place at the earliest opportunity, and that any government with a sense of responsibility would wish to clear up the matter at once.

Mr. Speaker: A question has been raised whether this is a proper question to be brought to the attention of the minister, in