

Inquiries of the Ministry

the inability to solve this matter? Is this what he means by all these words?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry my method of exposition is not fully satisfactory, but I have a responsibility in this matter, as I am sure the Leader of the Opposition recognizes, and I am not going to say anything that is going to add to the difficulties that are now being confronted by friendly countries, particularly members of the commission, in respect to a situation that is so explosive.

It would be inaccurate to say that the aggressor was China. I have never made that statement. The Geneva accord was followed by an aggression that came from the north. When the Canadian minority report is produced the details of that will be unfolded; but there is no doubt that the activities in the north have been abetted and supported by communist China. However, that is quite different from saying that communist China, in the first instance, was the aggressor.

Mr. Diefenbaker: It just became so afterward; is that it?

INDIA—INQUIRY AS TO INCREASED FOOD SHIPMENTS FROM CANADA

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, following up the question I asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs yesterday, I do not want to rush the minister but when will we be able to find out more about the consideration the government is giving, and where this consideration will lead, in connection with help to India?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): It is true, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. gentleman asked me a question about assistance by way of a gift of wheat to India. I had hoped to deal with it definitively today. We have been discussing this matter again this morning. The government hopes to be in a position early next week to make a statement.

CUBA—REDUCTION OF SENTENCE OF IMPRISONED CANADIAN

On the orders of the day:

Mr. O. W. Weichel (Waterloo North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Some time ago a Mr. Lippert of Kitchener was sentenced to a lengthy term of imprisonment by the Cuban government for breaking the laws of that country. I understand that the Cuban government is now ready to reduce

his sentence. Can the minister give me any information on this matter?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I may say to the hon. gentleman that we have had consultations quite recently with the appropriate authorities about this matter.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

REPORTED STATEMENT RESPECTING ELECTION IN JUNE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, perhaps we could return to the domestic battlefield for a few moments. May I direct a question to the Prime Minister. Would he inform the house whether the press statements we have seen this morning are true, concerning his words to the Liberal organizer in the maritimes that we will have an election in June?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure whether my hon. friend has heard the complete statement attributed to this particular gentleman, at least as reported on the radio this morning. He is the organizer of the Liberal party in Nova Scotia, and he is reported to have said that they must be ready for an election in June. He is also reported to have followed that up by saying this does not necessarily mean there is going to be an election in June, and I commend him for his caution in this matter.

INQUIRY INTO ALLEGED FRAUDULENT VOTING IN B.C.

On the orders of the day:

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question concerning the inquiry to be conducted by the chief electoral officer into the frauds allegedly committed at the time of the last general election in British Columbia.

Could the Prime Minister tell us if that inquiry will be open to the public with newspapermen being admitted, or if it will be held behind closed doors?

[*Text*]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the chief electoral officer is an officer of parliament, and how he conducts his inquiry will no doubt have to be arranged between himself and the appropriate officer of parliament, who I expect in this instance would be yourself, Mr. Speaker.