

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I may be permitted to say a word or two in this regard. I agree completely with the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam that the Stonehill case is not before the commission and that questions relating to the Stonehill case should not be ruled out of order on that account. The point I made, however, was that the question asked by the hon. member for Danforth was based on an assertion made by a witness appearing before that commission—I have never seen the assertion made elsewhere—and it is a rule of this house that every member who chooses to ask a question must take personal responsibility for any assertions he chooses to make in the question, and not be allowed to carry on fishing expeditions, unless we are to allow McCarthyite questions to smear people without any basis in fact.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I listened politely to the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam and I hope I will be listened to in an equally polite manner, because this is a very important point. I think it would be perfectly proper for the hon. member for Danforth to ask his question in an entirely different form without making any assertions. If the hon. member wanted to ask the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration whether anything had been communicated to a certain person, that question would be in order. However, to make assertions for which one is not willing to accept responsibility, particularly when the assertions are made in relation to a man whose credibility is under investigation by a commission, does seem to me, sir, to be an abuse of the rules.

I agree with the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam that it would be very desirable for Your Honour to take this important point under advisement.

**Mr. Speaker:** The matter is a very important one in principle. It is far too important to give a snap decision in this house, so, although I cannot say I will do so with the greatest of pleasure, certainly with the greatest of interest I will take it under consideration.

**Mr. Douglas:** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I suggest to Your Honour that when you are taking this matter under consideration, having regard to the statement just made by the Minister of Transport, perhaps one should remember that almost every day in this house members predicate ques-

tions on statements which appear in the press, and it would be a very brave man indeed who would assume responsibility for all the statements which appear in the press. Furthermore, may I point out that the hon. member for Danforth simply asked a question about a communication, and it seems to me he is entitled to a reply as to whether or not this communication took place.

**Mr. Speaker:** At this stage of the proceedings the Chair intends to take the matter under advisement and make a ruling as soon as possible.

**AIR TRANSPORT**

## NEGOTIATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH U.S.

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport. Could he advise the house at what stage the negotiations are between Canada and the United States with regard to the bilateral air agreement between the two countries; and could he advise whether these talks have completely stalled, as has been reported from time to time?

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport):** I do not think they are completely stalled, Mr. Speaker, but I should like to consider very carefully any answer I give to that question.

**HOUSING**

## LA SALLE, QUE.—NEGOTIATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL LOAN

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Raymond Rock (Jacques Cartier-Lasalle):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the minister in charge of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Have there been any negotiations or talks between the principals or representatives of Lasalle Heights Incorporated and officers of C.M.H.C. at Montreal concerning the possibility of an extra loan in order to change the fuel system at Lasalle Heights buildings from natural gas to electricity and/or other fuel?

**Mr. Speaker:** May I suggest that this is a question for the order paper.

**Mr. Rock:** Mr. Speaker, with respect, if you knew the concern of the more than 450 people living there—

**Some hon. Members:** Order paper.