

*Inquiries of the Ministry**(Text):*

**Mr. Pearson:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have taken those into consideration.

**Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur):** Mr. Speaker I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question that is an offshoot of that put by the hon. member for Three Rivers. Can he be more definitive or definite with the house in terms of time with regard to bringing forward the municipal development and loan fund legislation, in view of the fact that many Ontario municipalities have staged winter projects in anticipation of it?

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, we hope to proceed as quickly as possible with this piece of legislation which is on the order paper. How soon that will be, will depend on the progress made with the legislation now before the house.

**Mr. Fisher:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could we have an assurance from the Prime Minister that any developments that may have taken place in Quebec will have no bearing at all upon the intention to proceed in this house?

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, the provinces have an interest in this matter. They may be discussing it themselves at their conference in Halifax in August, but we have put the legislation on the order paper with the intention of proceeding with it.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can we be informed whether it will be proceeded with before the meeting of the provinces in August?

**Mr. Pearson:** That will depend on the progress made with other legislation before the house, including the budget resolutions.

**Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Prime Minister inform the house whether any letters of acceptance or protest regarding this bill have been received from provinces other than the province of Quebec?

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge the only communication received from the provinces has been from the province of Quebec, but I should like to check on that before I give a definitive answer in regard to this particular piece of legislation. I will be glad to go into the matter tomorrow.

**Mr. Knowles:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the Prime Minister's assertion that proceeding with this legislation depends upon the progress with regard to other legislation, may I ask if it would be appropriate for this matter to be discussed by

[Mr. Gregoire.]

the representatives of all four parties when we are discussing the legislation to be proceeded with by the house?

**Mr. Pearson:** Yes, it would be perfectly proper to discuss that in connection with the informal discussions that take place about house business.

[Later:]

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Secretary of State. In view of the suggestion made by the Prime Minister that proceeding with the municipal loan fund legislation depends on the arranging of the business of the house, will the Secretary of State call another meeting of the representatives of the four parties so that we might discuss this matter which, as he knows, we have not yet done?

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the hon. gentleman intends to refer to the subjects that have been discussed in our private meetings; therefore I will not contradict him. But I would hope it might be possible at 5.30 this afternoon—and it will save me a little trouble if they take this as notice—for the hon. gentlemen who usually consult with me to consult with me about the business of the house for the next few days, but I believe the consultation would be on a somewhat wider basis.

**Mr. Knowles:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make it quite clear that I agree with the Secretary of State that what goes on in these meetings should not be disclosed. But I think he would agree with me that the impression should not have been left by the Prime Minister that it was because of our inability to arrange for this legislation that it has not been proceeded with.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, since the hon. gentleman has seen fit to rise on a question of privilege I would say that I think the impression he thinks the Prime Minister created is entirely in his own mind.

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

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The impression I got from what the Prime Minister said was that we had laid down a certain program of government business, as I think is incontestably the right of the government, and certain things that we thought ought to be given priority, and that when those things were disposed of there would be an opportunity to go on with the other items on the order paper.