

NATIONAL DEFENCE

A.B.M. SYSTEM—INQUIRY AS TO DECISION ON CANADIAN POLICY

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, might I direct this question to the Prime Minister. It is based on his statement in the house on March 19 as recorded at page 6853 of *Hansard*. With reference to the A.B.M. system he said:

If, Mr. Speaker, after receiving all the information, we are led to the view that the A.B.M. system constitutes escalation and is conducive to greater peril for mankind, then we shall condemn it. We shall tell the United States that we disapprove. If, on the other hand, we are convinced that the A.B.M. system is necessary—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member resume his seat. May I point out to the hon. member that I do not think it is in order for him to read at length from a previous answer.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I think I have read sufficient of the statement to indicate that the Prime Minister said to the house on March 19 that when the government had studied the whole question of the A.B.M. system he would be prepared to make a statement either condemning the construction of the Safeguard System or indicating that he would co-operate in its construction. In view of the fact that the majority leader in the United States Senate has now stated—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I realize how important the matter is about which the hon. member is asking a question, but the length of the question should not be based on its importance. I would hope that the hon. member might ask the question.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I shall certainly obey your ruling, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the majority leader of the United States Senate has said that a decision will probably be made in the next few days in favour of the construction of the Safeguard System, has the Prime Minister made any decision concerning whether or not the Canadian government is going to condemn its construction, and what will the policy of the Canadian government be in respect of this matter which affects all mankind?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Prime Minister can give the house and the country any idea when the government will reach a decision? This matter has been hanging fire since March. It is one of the many matters which have been hanging fire. When does the government intend to make a decision or does it intend to make a decision at all?

Mr. Trudeau: The government is anxious to get back on the job and consider this and other items which are before it. As soon as we get back to the roster system we may have a bit more time to do so.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Prime Minister is anxious to get back to the job, will he explain to the house why he is waiting until October 22 to resume the session, particularly if there is so much work to be done?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt whether the question as asked by the hon. member is in order. In any event I suggest the question is argumentative.

GRAIN

WHEAT—ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF BOX CARS

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact there are only a few more days remaining in the present crop year and many elevator points are holding orders for box cars which are not available, will the Minister of Transport take it upon himself to call the management of the C.N.R. and the C.P.R. to see whether or not within the remaining few days it may be possible to direct extra box cars to these points in order to pick up the bulk of the five-bushel quota that is in effect? I have in mind the reluctance of the Canadian Wheat Board in this regard.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I have been in touch with officials of both railway companies. They are aware of this situation. I will make sure that they know the situation as reflected by the hon. member's question. I will also consult with the Ministers of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Agriculture with the hope of making these extra facilities available.