

proposed lay-offs in Nova Scotia, or is the government waiting until the mines close before taking any action.

**Mr. Speaker:** The minister has taken the other question as notice, and I think he will be able to answer both questions at once.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS BILL ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition):** I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the government proposes to make any special provision for the discussion of the private member's bill on capital punishment, so this bill may be dealt with at the present session after due consideration has been given to it.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** No consideration has been given to that question as yet.

## FINANCE

### LOAN TO EGYPT BY WORLD BANK

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. L. D. Crestohl (Cartier):** I should like to address a question to the Minister of Finance. My question is in two parts, and I have sent the hon. gentleman notice.

Will the minister tell the house whether the loan of \$56,500,000 recently made to Egypt by the world bank, on which he represents Canada, I believe, was approved by him or by any other representative of Canada?

Second, as the loan was made to enlarge the Suez canal, was there any condition that the canal shall be open and available for use by all member nations of the United Nations?

**Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance):** The loan in question was approved by the board of directors of the international bank for reconstruction and development, and not by the board of governors. Canada's representative on the board of directors is Mr. Louis Rasminsky and he, with my full approval, voted in favour of the loan. I believe it was approved unanimously by the executive board of the bank.

As to the second question, may I say there was no formal condition respecting freedom of transit attached to the resolution approving the loan. After all, this was the world bank and not individual countries, nor was it the United Nations for that matter. The hon. gentleman is aware, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that the views of the principal western nations, including Canada, in favour of freedom of transit in the canal are very well known.

## Inquiries of the Ministry

**Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary question may I ask the Minister of Finance if it is not a fact that the government of Canada gave instructions to Mr. Rasminsky in the situation outlined by the minister?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is right. I said that a moment ago.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** You said "approval". You were seeking to place the responsibility on the bank.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Essex East said I sought to place responsibility on the bank. That is not true. I point out that Mr. Rasminsky cast his vote in favour of that measure with my full approval. I said that in the first place.

## GRAIN

### WHEAT, OATS AND BARLEY—INTERIM PAYMENTS ON 1958-59 CROP

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. N. Ormiston (Melville):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. In view of the serious crop conditions in many parts of western Canada, has the Canadian wheat board made any effort to expedite interim payments on wheat, oats and barley?

**Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me notice of this question. I also received similar questions from the hon. member for Humboldt-Melfort (Mr. Rapp) and the hon. member for Moose Mountain (Mr. Southam). The answer is that each year the wheat board carries out a full accounting of the position of each operating pool as at December 31. This accounting is proceeding now and will be completed in a week's time. Following discussions with the board I expect to be in a position to make an announcement in regard to interim payments before the end of the month. It will be interesting to the house to note that interim payments authorized for wheat were made in February in each of the last four years.

### REQUEST FOR SPEED-UP OF SHIPMENTS THROUGH VANCOUVER

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday last I directed a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who was then absent, with respect to the speeding up of the shipment of grain through the port of Vancouver. At that time the acting minister indicated that we might expect an answer today.