

are satisfied with the consultations that have taken place up to the present time on the pending tax changes?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the provinces do not know any more than the opposition knows about what the tax changes will be which are to be announced in the budget and therefore the provinces cannot fairly comment on something they do not know about. They are being asked to comment at the meeting of finance ministers later.

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INDUSTRY

BOOK PUBLISHING—REPORTED REFUSAL OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST FIRM OF McCLELLAND AND STEWART

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I have a question for the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister inform the House whether the provincial government of Ontario has asked the federal government to give some assistance, together with the province of Ontario, to the publishing house of McClelland and Stewart and has the federal government refused to participate in such assistance, as I am informed the premier of Ontario announced in the legislature this morning?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I did not see that announcement, Mr. Speaker, and I am not in a position to contradict it. I know the Secretary of State brought the matter to the federal cabinet some time ago and that we discussed it and a decision was taken. This decision was to be communicated to the Ontario authorities by the Secretary of State. I would prefer to have the Secretary of State say exactly what he communicated to them rather than comment on it myself.

Mr. Lewis: A supplementary question. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister has informed the House that the matter was brought to cabinet and that a decision was taken by the government, surely as Prime Minister he is able to inform the House. Will he be good enough to say whether the decision of the federal government was to participate in assistance to McClelland and Stewart or not?

Mr. Trudeau: The decision was that the Secretary of State should communicate some information to the Ontario cabinet.

Mr. Lewis: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister had made no answer to my question that, of course, would be his right. However, I suggest that when the Prime Minister says the government has taken a position on the matter and as the matter was discussed and I have brought it to his attention, surely it is his duty to inform the House what the decision was of sloughing off the question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that is hardly a point of order. It is debate

Inquiries of the Ministry

between the right hon. gentlemen and the member for York South.

Mr. Lewis: May I rise on—

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member wish to rephrase the question?

Mr. Lewis: I want to ask the Prime Minister whether the following statement which is reported to have been made by the Secretary of State some time ago was government policy, namely, that publishers in need of working capital should be able to borrow under special terms and conditions and that it is the role of the provincial and federal governments to assist such industries which are essential for the country and which cannot survive on their own resources. I ask the Prime Minister whether this statement by the Secretary of State was government policy and, if so, did the government agree to participate in assistance to McClelland and Stewart as a result of that policy?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to be helpful to the member and forthcoming to the House in saying it had been discussed in cabinet, but I see it would have been simpler to have just taken notice of the question and said that the Secretary of State will answer the question when he is present.

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TRADE

ACTION TO INCREASE SALE OF MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS TO JAPAN—SURVEY OF POTENTIAL MARKETS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the statement yesterday in Vancouver by the chairman of Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan's largest trading company, that Canadian businessmen have not been aggressive enough in trying to sell in Japan and if they would expend just a little more effort they would probably be amazed at the results, will the minister take the first opportunity on motions to outline to the House what steps his department is willing to take in the immediate future to send additional trade missions of Canadian businessmen to the Japanese market, over and above anything that has been done in the past or is being done now, so that we may take full advantage of opportunities to sell, in particular, labour-intensive manufactured products in that market?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Hon. members will observe, Mr. Speaker, that the remark was made about Canadian businessmen, not about the Canadian government. If I were to deliver a statement each time my friend asked me for one, I would be on my feet almost every day. I will gladly write to the hon. member to give him a better idea than he already has of the efforts made by the Canadian government to develop trade with Japan.