

Inquiries of the Ministry

transaction. I indicated that if necessary we would consider such amendments. It may be that such amendments are not necessary. It may be that other ways will be arrived at to achieve the same result, that is to say, to ensure that a substantial proportion of our uranium reserves remain under Canadian control. I might add that I intend meeting tomorrow with ministers and one of the principals involved to discuss this matter further.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether, when he meets with his senior ministers, he is ready to consider such amendments to the Atomic Energy Control Act so that, instead of having to react in an emergency to a possible take-over of a particular company as he did last night, there will be legislation to prevent that happening in the future?

Mr. Trudeau: Before considering the introduction of general legislation this government would like to be able to state its general policy applying to the whole problem as it affects the Canadian economy. This is something we would rather do.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the veto by the government with regard to the transfer of shares would also extend to the movement of the head office outside the country? I ask this question in view of a report that such a transfer of the head office is actually being considered by the two companies concerned.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, so far as I know this is a hypothetical situation. I have had no information from the president of the company to the effect that he wished to make such a move. But it is obvious that even under the Atomic Energy Control Act the Canadian government has a very large degree of control over uranium and uranium works. I do not know, once again, if such a hypothetical move is being considered, but obviously there would be various other ways to ensure Canadian control over uranium and uranium processes in Canada.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Surely the Prime Minister of Canada does not suggest he would make an announcement such as he made last night on a hypothetical basis. That surely is not in keeping with his responsibility.

Mr. Trudeau: I do not know about it being in keeping with my responsibility, but the
[Mr. Trudeau.]

Canadian government was not officially notified by the company of any such happening.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why did you not get in touch with the company?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Hull.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: It seems to me we have had quite a few supplementaries on this subject. I suggest that perhaps we should give an opportunity to other hon. members.

[Later:]

Mr. Speaker: I think there are two pending supplementaries, one by the hon. member for York South and one by the hon. member for St. John's East. We will start with the hon. member for York South.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is addressed to the Prime Minister and arises out of one of his answers a few minutes ago. If I heard him correctly he stated that any future amendment of the Atomic Energy Control Act should wait until there was a general statement by the government concerning its policy with regard to foreign ownership. If I understood him correctly, may I ask the Prime Minister when we may expect such a statement with regard to government policy concerning foreign ownership of Canada's economy?

Mr. Trudeau: On the first part of the question I want to be clear. I was not indicating that the amendment we would have to contemplate under the circumstances to which I referred last night would be necessarily a particular amendment referring to a particular company. Therefore in that sense any amendment might be general anyhow. But if the hon. member is referring to a much larger overhaul of this and other acts in order to ensure that in all hypothetical cases there would be a preservation of Canadian ownership, it is in this reference that I am talking about a general statement.

With regard to the second part of the question concerning when the statement will be made, I do not know. The matter is being considered now by a minister and he will submit recommendations to cabinet within a month; but I cannot guarantee to the House at what time the policy will in fact be adopted by the cabinet.