

Inquiries of the Ministry

However, we pointed out on that occasion how important it was that we got clear and accurate answers to our questions.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) mention that this new procedure might cut down on the time of the members of his party and prevent them from asking some questions. In my view, many questions are asked that should not be asked, and this applies particularly to the Conservatives during the past several weeks.

Such a procedure would help improve the situation and shorten the time taken up by the question period.

We have been here for an hour and ten minutes already and the orders of the day have not yet been called.

Mr. Speaker, we believe the proposed thirty minutes would be sufficient, provided each group is recognized and has an opportunity to ask questions and the minister concerned answers accurately and does not beat around the bush, so that the house may be well informed when members ask questions.

As I said last Thursday, we are willing to give you our full support and to co-operate with you.

[Text]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank you for your very sincere, if unsuccessful, effort to speed up and make more effective the work of the house during the current session.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Just plain nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Order. At this time I should like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his helpful remarks. Perhaps he is right. In matters of serious importance such as this perhaps the best method to follow is to make haste slowly. I do hope that the committee on procedure and reform will activate itself within the next few days; then we can consider the matter very carefully. With the co-operation of hon. members, shall we start with orders of the day?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**SOUTH VIET NAM—RECOGNITION OF NEW GOVERNMENT**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It has to do with the successful coup in South Viet Nam. In order to ensure that the Canadian decision on recognition will not be a mere formality or an automatic following of other countries

in this regard, is he able to say that such recognition when considered will not be done hastily but only after a full investigation of the surrounding circumstances leading up to the revolution?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. gentleman that the government will give the fullest consideration to the recognition of the new government when it is firmly established in South Viet Nam. The government does not have before it all the facts which it considers necessary to make such a decision, which will neither be made with undue haste nor lightly.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that we do not have any direct diplomatic or trade mission in Viet Nam and also because of the fact that there are a large number of Canadian personnel in the country, not only in Saigon but also in the rural areas, what information can the Secretary of State for External Affairs give us about the safety of Canadian nationals in Viet Nam?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman perhaps has not recalled, we have a representative on the international supervisory commission, a commission made up of representatives from Canada, India and Poland. We have received information from our representative. The events of last week in South Viet Nam were surrounded, of course, by great confusion. However, I can tell the house that according to information so far available, no Canadian lives were lost in the events during the last few days in South Viet Nam.

LABOUR RELATIONS**BRITISH COLUMBIA—REPORTED WALKOUT OF LONGSHOREMEN**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a proper, brief and urgent question to the Minister of Labour. Has the minister any information to give the house—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member was kind enough to send me a copy of this question. May I suggest to him that the first part of the question is in order and that the second paragraph be dropped.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Speaker, I will willingly sacrifice the 30 seconds involved. Has the minister any information to give the house in respect of the reported walkout of longshoremen employed in the ports of British Columbia?