

Inquiries of the Ministry

the House to move a motion of urgent and pressing necessity involving the defence production-sharing agreement between Canada and the United States. I do so in view of the fact that the imbalance of payments is a little more accurately described as being \$404 million and not in excess of \$500 million and that this imbalance is due mainly to the situation created by the Viet Nam war and therefore is not a matter of shared continental defence priorities to which the agreements of 1963—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is making a speech. He knows that under Standing Order 43 and the practice of the House he should indicate what the motion is and the Chair will inquire whether there is unanimous consent.

Mr. Forrestall: I move, seconded by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie):

That the whole question of the defence-sharing program between Canada and the United States be referred to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence and that the members of the committee be able to study any document, understanding, written or oral, pertaining to this particular defence-sharing arrangement.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have heard the motion proposed by the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East.

[Translation]

Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Since there is no unanimous consent, the motion cannot be put.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

U.S. DISC LEGISLATION—PLANS TO ASSIST CANADIAN INDUSTRY—FORECAST OF EFFECTS—REPRESENTATIONS TO PRESIDENT NIXON

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question for the Prime Minister relating to the DISC program. In view of the answers the Prime Minister has previously given with regard to this program and in view of the apparent decision now reached by the Senate-House conference committee in Washington with regard to the DISC proposals, has the government any plans to assist Canadian industry to compete with export industries in the United States when the DISC program goes into effect there?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have been studying contingency programs for several months now. I am not aware when the DISC program will go into effect, but if it does and we have reason to announce anything we will do it at that time.

[Mr. Forrestall.]

Mr. Stanfield: I have a supplementary for the Prime Minister or the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Is the government going to canvass industry in Canada and the provincial governments with a view to obtaining an accurate forecast of what the probable effects of the United States DISC program will be on Canadian export industries before the possible storm actually descends upon us?

Mr. Trudeau: As far as governments are concerned, Mr. Speaker, the whole matter was on the agenda of the federal-provincial conference a few weeks ago and the governments were invited to make their views known to the federal government. As far as industries are concerned, perhaps the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce could reply.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Just to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is terribly difficult to know, first of all, what will come out of Congress by way of the DISC program; second, if the President is going to agree with what comes out of Congress and, third, what use will be made of it by the different companies in the United States, and a few other elements of uncertainty. In these circumstances it is impossible to give any scientific assessment of what the effect of the DISC program will be on Canadian industry. Besides, of course, it would vary greatly from one industry to another.

Mr. Stanfield: No doubt it will vary, Mr. Speaker. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he intends to take this matter up with President Nixon when he meets him next Monday, specifically the DISC program in the form it now seems to have been approved by the joint Senate and House of Representatives committee? Does the Prime Minister intend to take this matter up and to press the Canadian point of view? Also, will the Prime Minister be able to take with him forecasts as to the effect of the DISC program if it implemented in the form that has been approved by the joint Congressional committee.

• (11:30 a.m.)

Mr. Trudeau: With regard to the last part of the question concerning forecasts, I believe the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has indicated what the answer to that is. As to taking up the matter itself, I am sure we will be discussing bilateral economic relations between the two countries although, in line with what the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has just said, I do not know if the President will want to take me into his confidence and tell me what he is going to do with the DISC program that emerges from Congress, or whether he will express his veto.

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo): Has the Prime Minister been able to indicate to the American government, the President or his representatives the damage that will be caused to manufacturing in Canada by the introduction of the DISC program?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if I understood the hon. member well. If the hon. member is asking about the extent of the damage which might be caused, then in so far as that question is not hypothetical it has just been