

Inquiries of the Ministry

session, making a statement on motions in view of the very great interest in this matter both in this house and in Canada?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Following upon my reading of some of the minister's statements I should like to ask him whether he can advise if the government is now giving consideration to the suggestion I made last September, namely that Canada as a member of the United Nations take an initiative in having inscribed upon the provisional agenda of the General Assembly the whole question of Nigeria-Biafra, which situation seems to be deteriorating before our eyes?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman and the house know, we have been discouraged from taking any initiative in the United Nations upon the advice of the Secretary General. However as a result of the most recent stoppage of relief in that area a new situation arises, and I certainly would not rule out any type of action that might be useful being taken.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since it is necessary that relief efforts to Biafra-Nigeria be resumed, has the government considered following the suggestion Senator Kennedy made a couple of weeks ago. He suggested that the United Nations might convene a relief conference in Geneva, perhaps, at which the disputants and other interested third parties might agree on regulations governing some relief program.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, that might turn out to be a useful method of proceeding. Nonetheless I would think it would be much more useful if those countries providing the relief were to get together. They could put the most effective pressures on both sides in this conflict.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS**NATURAL GAS—ANNOUNCED PRICE INCREASES**

Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Yesterday I asked him if he would look into rising prices of natural gas in the west. It seems that demand in the United States for Canadian gas is forcing the price of our gas up, and making it too expensive for Canadian consumers. Has the minister had a chance to look at the

report I alluded to? If so, what action will he take on behalf of the consumers of Canada?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have not been able to find the report the hon. member referred to. I believe my office has asked him to supply me with a copy of the report he referred to yesterday. I understand that the National Energy Board expects to hold hearings this fall on applications for additional export licences. At such hearings the board is bound to take into account the need to ensure adequate supply for Canadian consumers. It would of course take into account the effect on Canadian prices.

If the hon. member will supply me with a copy of the report he mentioned I will be glad to refer it to the Minister without Portfolio from Saskatchewan, who has jurisdiction over the National Energy Board.

Mr. Saltzman: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the serious situation that will prevail in Canada as a result of increased gas prices, is he contemplating taking with respect to natural gas an action similar to that taken with respect to the price of copper, when copper prices were going up in international markets? On that occasion he indicated that he would take effective steps to make sure that the price of copper did not rise excessively, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): No, Mr. Speaker.

FARM MACHINERY**REQUEST FOR TABLING OF BARBER REPORT**

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Can he advise whether the long awaited report of the Barber Commission on the price of farm machinery will be tabled in the house before it adjourns for the summer recess?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I do not have this report in my hands yet. After I receive it I shall go through the customary procedure of considering whether it is to be tabled in the house.

Mr. Southam: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister advise us when we may expect to get this long awaited report?