

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, as a member of the security council Canada now has both the opportunity and I think the obligation to try to bring about a political settlement. We have taken the view up to now that as a country contributing to the force we should not enter into support of one side or the other. We will not change that view, but we believe the time has come when certain steps should be undertaken to try to encourage a settlement. We are now discussing with the country concerned and certain other countries a proposal which would have to carry their support in order to be adopted. I am not in a position to report acceptance of our idea as yet; however, we are putting forward certain proposals.

Mr. Douglas: I should like to ask the minister whether this proposal of the Canadian government is being discussed by the security council.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): This proposal is one which will have to be resolved by the security council if it is put forward. Whether it will be put forward will depend on consultations which are now under way.

Mr. D. V. Pugh (Okanagan Boundary): I should like to ask the secretary of state whether Canada is still paying the full cost of her peace keeping force in Cyprus?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, Canada is one country that is paying for the support for her troops in the United Nations force in Cyprus. We are doing this because the United Nations does not have the necessary funds. I think this is a useful kind of contribution to make in an area where we want to strengthen the peace-making role of the United Nations.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and ask him whether there has been any request for assistance from the government of Cyprus other than for military aid and whether Canada will provide it?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I think that I should take this question as notice. I am not sure, but I will answer next week.

[Mr. Douglas.]

[English]

HEALTH AND WELFARE**MEDICARE—MEETING WITH PROVINCES
RESPECTING IMPLEMENTATION**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I intended to pose this question to the Acting Prime Minister, but in view of the fact that he has not given answers to a majority of the questions posed to him today I shall direct this question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. What is the date of the meeting between the provinces and the federal government to discuss implementation of the medicare program?

Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, if I understood the question to relate to a possible meeting, there has been no date set as yet.

Mr. Starr: Have there been no requests from the provinces for such a meeting?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, the premiers met in the summer and a letter was addressed to the Prime Minister suggesting a meeting on medicare. The Prime Minister has told the house that his reply to Premier Robichaud, who made the request on behalf of the premiers, was under consideration.

Mr. Starr: When will a decision be rendered for a meeting to take place prior to the date now set by legislation for the implementation of medicare?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, no date has been set for any meeting and no decision has been taken in respect of such a meeting. I gather the Prime Minister will be able to report on his reply to Premier Robichaud next week.

Mr. Starr: Mr. Speaker, I wish to address another question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the powerful policy statement made last night by the President of the Privy Council, is the minister now prepared to give the assurance to this house and the country that medicare "will not be sacrificed on the altar of economy"?

Mr. MacEachen: The greatest assurance the hon. member could wish to have is the fact that the law of the land clearly states the commencement date of medicare.