

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): I regret I cannot clarify the situation immediately; it is still being examined, and I doubt whether a final decision will be made until after the meeting in Stockholm, when this subject, among others will be discussed.

Mr. Douglas: Has the minister yet decided who will represent Canada at that meeting?

Mr. Sharp: No decision has yet been taken.

[Translation]

INCREASE IN INTEREST RATES
ON GOVERNMENT BONDS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Henri Latulippe (Compton-Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I put a question to the hon. Minister of Finance. I should like to put it to him again today, because I do not think that he understood it.

In the last few days the Minister of Finance announced an increase in the interest rate on government bonds which the government is unable to redeem at maturity. This rise in the interest rate varies between 2 and 2½ per cent and I should like to know whether this increase is included in the blue book containing the estimates for 1968.

Mr. Speaker: I remember that the question was asked by the hon. member, but I do not know whether it was thought in order at the time. However, if the hon. minister is willing to reply at this time, I have no objection.

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): An attempt was made in the estimates which were tabled to forecast the requirements of the government in connection with the payment of interest.

[Translation]

Mr. Latulippe: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Yesterday, in answer to my question, the minister said that there was no substance in my statement, but I have here assertions in support of the statement I made yesterday.

As the minister told me that my figures were wrong and without substance, I would like to come back to the question I asked him—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I point out to the hon. member that if there is a misunderstanding between himself and the minister with regard to the interpretation of certain figures, that is

Inquiries of the Ministry

not sufficient grounds for a question of privilege. It would be simpler for the hon. member to put a supplementary question.

Mr. Latulippe: In that case I shall put a supplementary question to the minister.

I said yesterday that the interest rate was to be increased from 2 to 2½ per cent, because those bonds for \$175 million were at 4½ per cent and they are bought back at 7¼ per cent—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member should ask his question, if he has one.

Mr. Latulippe: Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister whether the difference between 7¼ and 4½ is really 2.8 per cent. Was I wrong when I asked this question relating to the increase in the interest rate on those bonds?

Mr. Speaker: I repeat what I suggested a moment ago. This is an argument between the minister and the hon. member. I do not think the question is really in order.

[English]

IMMIGRATION

ALLEGED INACCURATE INFORMATION GIVEN
BY OFFICIALS ABROAD

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): I wish to address a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. I first put this question to him some days ago in view of charges which had been made by recently arrived immigrants that the information given to them by immigration offices outside this country was false, and that they had not found the situation here the same as that which had been described to them. Has an investigation been made of these charges, and is the minister prepared to make a statement either agreeing with them or refuting them?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the question is not all that simple because in all our immigration offices we give out general information on Canada, on matters such as the average wages, the average temperature and the average rents. An immigrant can easily and quite honestly misinterpret the information given to him, and that gives rise to misunderstandings such as the ones brought to our attention. However, I think that Canadian immigration agents have always, and not just in the last year or two, informed immigrants as well as they could.