

Inquiries of the Ministry

requirements of the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Again, rather than attempt to speculate I will, with the hon. member's permission, wait until Monday and get a specific answer for him.

Mr. Stanfield: I have a supplementary question for the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the fact there is a ministerial committee or another committee concerned with this project, can the Acting Prime Minister inform the House whether the position of the government of Canada with regard to a permit has been conveyed to the province of Quebec? I ask this in view of the obvious importance that the government of Quebec attaches to this project and the obvious opportunities there are for misunderstanding. Can the Acting Prime Minister indicate whether the government of Canada has conveyed its position on this matter to the government of the province of Quebec?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the government of Quebec knows the law of Canada with respect to projects of this kind and intends to comply with the law. I am sure the hon. gentleman would not suggest otherwise.

PROPOSED JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC
DEVELOPMENT—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON HUNTING
RIGHTS OF INDIANS FOLLOWING TRANSFER OF LANDS

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice whether his department has been looking into the terms and conditions under which these lands were transferred to the province from territorial status in relation to the rights of the Indian population? If so, can the hon. gentleman report to the House as to the position the government is taking with regard to the proposal to develop these areas which are within the traditional hunting and trapping grounds of the Indian people?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, we have been looking into a number of aspects of the legal issues related to this question. As to the specific one referred to by the hon. member, we have been doing some work in the general area. However, I should like to take notice of the precise terms of the question directed to me and see whether there is anything I can usefully report to the House at this stage.

PROPOSED JAMES BAY HYDROELECTRIC
DEVELOPMENT—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE THAT
NAVIGABLE WATERS PROTECTION ACT WILL BE
OBSERVED

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the fact that some years ago, at the time of the government headed by the predecessor of the present Prime Minister, the province of British Columbia, presumably in full knowledge of the law, went ahead and constructed a dam across the Peace River in breach of the Navigable Waters Protection Act, thereby causing great environmental damage, will the Acting Prime Minister give an undertaking to the House that the law will in fact be observed?

[Mr. Jamieson.]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is necessary to give any such undertaking. This government is committed to the support of the law of Canada and will support it in this instance. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would like to make some accusations that would clarify the matter.

Mr. Baldwin: What about the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act?

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

SUGGESTED USE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES TO
REGAIN CONTROL OF CERTAIN SECTORS, INCLUDING
FOREIGN-CONTROLLED INSURANCE COMPANIES

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister. In light of a government report released yesterday which revealed that Canada's foreign exchange reserves reached a record level of \$5.67 billion in February, and in view of the fact that Canada has a floating dollar and hence does not need these reserves, does the government intend to use part of these funds in order to regain Canadian control of certain key sectors of the economy which are currently dominated by foreign firms?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is suggesting we should keep our reserves in other than a liquid form. I would be glad to hear more details of his proposal.

Mr. Broadbent: That is precisely what is being suggested. To be more specific, in view of the report made available from Swiss sources earlier in the week that Canada has the highest percentage of foreign-controlled insurance companies, would the government consider seriously using part of its foreign exchange reserves in order to gain control of these foreign-owned insurance companies in Canada, bearing in mind that these companies are an important source of investment capital which could be used to make more jobs available in this country?

Mr. Sharp: What the hon. gentleman is suggesting is that if we needed these reserves to support our currency we would sell these assets. I do not think that is a very good policy.

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[Translation]

HOUSING

POINTE-GATINEAU—LA FERME DU BARON PROJECT—
REQUEST THAT OWNERS BE COMPENSATED

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Prime Minister.

I would ask him whether the Canadian government intends to take steps to indemnify house owners of La Ferme le Baron development at Pointe-Gatineau against the many defects and poor quality of the construction.