

Mr. Buchanan: As I have just stated, the government is not unsympathetic to the idea. But there are seven signatories to the original agreement in principle and there is a proviso that all seven signers must agree. As I pointed out in reply to the previous question, the Cree are opposed to any extension, so we are hung up on that issue.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALLEGED OBJECTION BY FRANCE TO ATTENDANCE OF CANADA AT ECONOMIC SUMMIT MEETING—VIEW OF UNITED STATES

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can the minister advise the House whether reports from Canadian officials in Washington are exact when they state that the President of France is still objecting very strongly to Canada's proposed participation in the economic summit to be held in November?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm any such reports with respect to the position taken by the President of France. The facts are that Canada's candidacy is being supported by a number of the countries already invited to the summit. Not all of them have taken that position, and I understand that one of them which is still outstanding in that respect is France. I hope that any remaining objection will be cleared away. I understand there is concern as to the ultimate size of any such meeting.

Mr. Wagner: Would the minister confirm that President Ford is most favourable to inviting Canada to Paris.

Mr. MacEachen: The Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, made it clear when he was in Ottawa that in his view Canada should attend. That policy, obviously, is the policy of the President of the United States also.

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● (1430)

NATIONAL SECURITY

REQUEST FOR DEBATE ON REASONS FOR INVOKING WAR MEASURES ACT IN OCTOBER, 1970—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister and has to do with the shocking revelations made the other evening in an unusually good piece of work by the CBC in connection with the FLQ difficulties of five years ago. In view of the fact that both the premier of Quebec and also the former minister, the Hon. Mr. Kierans, have clearly stated to the people of Canada that there was no serious basis for the action that was taken, and in view of the detriment to freedom in consequence of what was done, will the minister arrange to set aside a date for the House to find out the true facts in connection with what took place?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Oral Questions

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the interest of hon. members opposite indicates that what I am speaking about has no relationship to their thinking. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister stated some years ago that ultimately the true facts would come out, since they have now done so over the CBC will parliament have the opportunity of discussing a matter which today has all the appearances of applied tyranny?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept necessarily the description that the right hon. gentleman has given of the action taken by our former colleague Mr. Kierans, but I would recommend that he read once again the letter that Premier Bourassa wrote to the Prime Minister which is to be found in *Hansard* for October, 1970. It sets out fully the reasons that the premier of Quebec, the mayor of Montreal and all those who had responsibility at that time made a very strong plea to the Canadian government to invoke the War Measures Act. They may have changed their minds now but at that time they were very clear. Perhaps one of the problems is that people do forget the circumstances at the time.

Mr. Diefenbaker: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. This is the first time there has been the revelation that the mayor of Montreal and the premier of Quebec determine the course of the people of Canada through the government. The minister still has not answered my question. In order to clarify the matter, not in the ex parte way the minister dealt with the question just now but in order to get the facts and to have Mr. Kierans and the premier of Quebec here, would the minister allow a date to be set aside so we can discuss the matter and determine the facts? Would he also tell the people of Canada whether the strategic operations centre that was described during that broadcast and which took over responsibility from the cabinet for what was called "crisis management"—a kind of CIA—is still in existence today?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, may I deal first of all with the suggestion of the right hon. gentleman to set aside a day. I would point out to him that, of course, there are a number of opposition days.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: If the party of my right hon. friend would like to designate one of those days to bring in a motion dealing with this subject, it would have to be accepted by the House and would be a privilege that does not have to be extended by the government. May I also say to the right hon. member quite seriously that it is the intention of the government to bring forward legislation to replace the War Measures Act to deal with civil disorders, at which time the right hon. gentleman and any other member who wants to take part in the debate can go back to history and go forward into the future as they see fit.