

Inquiries of the Ministry

to the Minister of Finance. Could he tell us whether the Minister of Finance has seriously considered the request made last week by the Finance Minister of Quebec who claimed from the federal government the \$200 million collected in the province of Quebec through the so-called social development tax?

[English]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, without agreeing to the figure may I say that the matter has been discussed several times and that the position of the government of Canada has been made clear.

Mr. Ricard: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Are we to understand that the government is refusing to consider this question, as requested by the provincial government?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**NATO—POSITION RESPECTING NON-MILITARY CLAUSES OF TREATY**

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Following the appearance in a Toronto newspaper yesterday of a letter by Mr. Escott Reid which contained the assertion that the non-military clauses in the NATO treaty, including a commitment to democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, are as important as the military clauses and have been so regarded by Canadian governments in the past, would the Prime Minister make clear to the House whether the Canadian government today regards the treaty in the same way?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question, in my view, is not the type of question which can be asked at this time. The hon. member is inviting the Prime Minister to make a very general statement of policy, and I would not think that could be done at this time.

Mr. Broadbent: Then may I rephrase my question. Would the Prime Minister consider making a statement on motions on this question early in the new year?

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE**ELIMINATION OF GRANTS TO TOBACCO GROWERS**

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

[Mr. Ricard.]

In view of the report of the Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs regarding tobacco and in view also of the concern of tobacco growers, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he intends to cancel all the subsidies now granted to improve tobacco soils and to enlarge tobacco farms.

[English]

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): No, Mr. Speaker; the research program that we are carrying on with the tobacco industry will be carried on at about the same level.

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

Would the Minister of Agriculture tell us if he approves without reservations the report made by the Minister of National Health and Welfare?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member may ask the question, but I cannot allow the minister to answer it.

[English]

BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM**POLICY RESPECTING FRENCH LANGUAGE UNITS WITHIN PUBLIC SERVICE**

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Was the Secretary of State expressing government policy in the House yesterday when he said that French language units within the Public Service are a normal continuation of government policy on bilingualism within the Public Service?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question might perhaps be asked in different terms, but I doubt whether according to the rules the minister can be asked if he is stating government policy when he makes a statement in the House. In asking this question I think the hon. member is alluding to the fact that such questions are allowed when statements are made outside the House. The hon. member may wish to rephrase his question.

Mr. Nowlan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it government policy, as stated by the Secretary of State in the House yesterday that French language units within the Public Service are a normal continuation of government policy on bilingualism in the Public Service?