

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker, but we are looking at our representation there just as we are in other parts of the world. There are a number of missions that we would like to open in due course and hope to be able to do so.

[Later:]

ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE MISSION IN
TAIWAN

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to the one asked by the hon. member for Spadina and is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that the government of Taiwan has indicated great interest in having Canada establish at least a trade mission in Taiwan, does the minister have any intention of doing so?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker.

INQUIRIES OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): Mr. Speaker, I have a question I want to ask the Minister of Finance. Would he consider drawing the federal government's wage and salary increase restraint guidelines to the attention of the commission examining parliamentary incomes?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Prime Minister. Would the Prime Minister please state to the House why he did not attend the Liberal caucus thinkers conference this weekend in Edmonton? Could it be that he had a more pleasant task to perform?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

FINANCE

FREEDING OF DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE—DIS-
CUSSION AT FINANCE MINISTERS
CONFERENCE

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Finance. Could the minister inform the House whether at the meeting of finance ministers over the weekend in Winnipeg there was any discussion of offsetting measures or special problems arising from the change in government policy to a floating exchange rate?

[Mr. Ryan.]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I did answer that question in my statement. If my hon. friend will read it, I think he will find the answer.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

• (4:10 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 58—ALLEGED FAILURE
TO PROTECT PUBLIC TREASURY IN REFIT-
TING OF HMCS "BONAVENTURE" AND GEN-
ERALLY

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster) moved:

That the government has displayed its mismanagement and abuse of powers and has failed in its responsibility to protect the public treasury in relation to the refitting of H.M.C.S. *Bonaventure* in particular; and generally there has been neglect and default in carrying out programs and recommendations designed to protect the taxpayers of Canada from waste, extravagance and other abuses in the spending of government money and for these failures the government deserves the condemnation of the House.

He said: Mr. Speaker, we have had a long afternoon of questions of privilege, statements and the like, and even though the hour is late I hope that this motion will commend itself to the members of the House. It may receive a mixed reaction from some, but I think all members on the treasury benches will welcome an opportunity to put their side of the case concerning the *Bonaventure* before the House and on the record. Personally, as a member of parliament, I feel that I have a grave responsibility to bring this matter forward for discussion, and I am more than pleased that my colleagues have agreed that it should be the basis for an opposition motion on an allotted day.

I never thought that the time would come, Mr. Speaker, when I would feel sorry for a civil servant. But I must admit I do now, because I feel that many of the civil servants who have been involved in the *Bonaventure* fiasco should have their day in court. I firmly believe that it can only be here, in this forum, which is the highest court in the land.

There are, as I see it, two general responsibilities with regard to the *Bonaventure*, and both are interrelated. I have arbitrarily called them the financial responsibility and the political responsibility. I think the financial responsibility has been dealt with quite well.