

Mr. Sharp: Just in a general way, and I know the Minister of Finance would agree with this, we would like to settle the problems in an expanding economy and not in a contracting economy. In other words, we would like to see the trade surplus we now have with the United States reduced by an expansion of trade in which the volume of our imports went up reflecting an expansion of demand in Canada. That is the spirit in which generally we would like this problem to be settled. On the other question of what we could talk about specifically, the United States has not even indicated the subjects they would like to talk about.

POSSIBLE IMPOSITION BY UNITED STATES OF
COUNTERVAILING DUTIES BECAUSE OF EMPLOYMENT
SUPPORT ACT

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. On October 21 reports from Washington credited an official of the United States government with saying the Canadian government had been informed that countervailing duties would be imposed industry by industry if U.S. companies complained about the assistance given to Canadian industries under the \$80 million Employment Support Act. I want to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs if such information was conveyed to him either through the Canadian embassy in Washington or through the United States embassy here in Ottawa?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker. It has not been conveyed to the Canadian government at any level.

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the Leader of the Opposition and then go to the hon. member for Témiscamingue. We have not yet had the first round of questioning and have been going for 15 minutes.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the reference of the Secretary of State for External Affairs to unilateral actions, positions and this sort of thing, may I ask whether it is in order for the government of Canada to unilaterally decide it can break an agreement with the International Monetary Fund with regard to floating our dollar and then protest about the United States taking some unilateral action?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member's supplementary is argumentative and is debate.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—AVAILABILITY OF
APPLICATION FORMS

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Inquiries of the Ministry

He tabled today the local initiatives program. Are these application forms presently available at the various Canada manpower and immigration centres throughout Canada?

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, they have been mailed to all manpower offices. Many manpower offices may in fact have the local initiatives program application forms today and all the rest should receive them almost immediately. So far as the municipalities are concerned, the co-ordinators for each province are expected to mail application forms directly to the municipalities within their area and that includes the territories as well.

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FINANCE

GOVERNMENT ACTION RESPECTING EXCHANGE LEVEL
OF CANADIAN DOLLAR

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In light of the answer of the minister on Monday that the Department of Finance had acted to support the Canadian dollar in the market over the last week, would the minister now tell us whether he can assure the United States authorities that the Canadian dollar is freely floating and therefore not running afoul or counter to the United States conditions for the application of the surcharge?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Well, Mr. Speaker, that was not the answer I gave.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, the minister did indicate that there had been government action to affect the value of the Canadian dollar and keep it below par with the United States dollar. If this is not action by the government, what is?

Mr. Benson: I said nothing of the kind, Mr. Speaker.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INQUIRY AS TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF STEPS TO
STRENGTHEN

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. When may the House expect the government to announce—and I shall quote the minister's words—the “dramatic new moves” to strengthen the Canadian economy as mentioned by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce in a speech to an audience at Montebello, Quebec, on October 18 in which he said the government is planning such moves at the present time?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there is a question of dates here. Perhaps the minister had drafted his speech before the Minister of Finance made his announcement in the House.