

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the meetings to which the Secretary of State for External Affairs has referred in this House have taken place. I do not know when they were or are to be scheduled.

[Later:]

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have an answer to a question which the leader of the New Democratic Party asked me earlier, if I might be permitted to give it. It relates to the meetings between the Canadian government and the Department of State in Washington on the question of the pollution of the Pacific as a result of possible oil transportation from Alaska to the northwestern United States. I have been informed that there has been agreement to set the meetings for May 3 and they will take place on that date.

[Later:]

Mr. Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Comox-Alberni has a supplementary to the prior question.

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I have a question related to those asked by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands of the Minister of Transport. Are any discussions or negotiations going on with the province of British Columbia leading to the establishment of permanent protective arrangements, along the lines recommended by the Arrow task force, for oil leakage prevention and clean-up on the Pacific coast?

Mr. Jamieson: Not specifically with the government of British Columbia as of this moment. However, the recommendations that came from a committee of this House and from the McTaggart-Cowan group with regard to the establishment of a contingency plan are nearly completed. Many parts of them are in fact complete, and when this is done we will be discussing them with all of the provinces that have coastal waters and that are concerned about those waters, as we are. That should be within the next month.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL PARKS

QUEBEC—ESTABLISHMENT OF PARK IN TÉMISCAMINGUE

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development who is also responsible for national parks.

Are discussions taking place with Quebec authorities at the present time concerning the establishment of a national park in Témiscamingue?

Hon. Jean Crétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, there are no discussions taking place at the present time concerning the establishment of a national park in Témiscamingue. I know that all Quebecers feel it would be desirable to develop national parks not only in Témiscamingue but in other areas of the province as well.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister.

Can he tell us if any action is now being taken by his department for the restoration of the ancient fort of Ville-Marie?

Mr. Speaker: I believe that the supplementary question could be put on the order paper. And I wish to point out to hon. members that I have always had serious doubts about questions of the kind asked by the hon. member. In any event, I assume that he has obtained the information that could be useful to him.

[English]

I believe the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe has a supplementary question.

BONNE BAY—LETTING OF CONTRACT FOR SURVEY WORK

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. Georges-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, would the minister indicate whether a contract has been let to do survey work on the national park in western Newfoundland, Bonne Bay park?

Mr. Speaker: Again I suggest that question might well be placed on the order paper.

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[Translation]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE EFFECT OF COST OF LIVING INCREASE ON PEOPLE WITH LOW INCOMES

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Can he tell us what are his intentions as regards the substantial increase in the cost of living during the past month? Since this increase affects low-salaried employees and people receiving old-age security pensions, does the minister intend to take steps to offset the effects of this increased cost of living on elderly people or low-income groups?

[English]

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the annual increase at 1.9 per cent was the lowest experienced by any western country, and therefore any change in policy to deal with that for the moment satisfactory situation would have to be made by the government and announced by the Minister of Finance from time to time as would be appropriate.

[Later:]

[Translation]

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Could the minister say whether, following this cost of living increase, he has given new directives or contacted the Chairman of the Prices and Incomes Commission in order to request explanations on the failure of this agency?