

Soviet Union protesting the flights of Soviet aircraft over commercial air lanes near the Province of Newfoundland, bearing in mind the great risk to life and property caused by these military manoeuvres on or over routes used for international flights?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): The Canadian government did make representations to the government of the Soviet Union to that effect.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): May I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether Canada or her allies engage in air manoeuvres which may take planes fairly close to the boundaries of some other country, particularly the Soviet Union?

Mr. Sharp: I doubt very much whether they would fly in such a way as to interfere with international civil aviation, which is the problem here.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Do these flights of Soviet aircraft near the coast of Newfoundland bear any relation to the proposed visit of the Premier of Newfoundland to the communist People's Republic of China?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether he has received any response from the government of the Soviet Union as a result of his protest and if he has received any response, what the response was.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as I recall the exchange, when we drew the attention of the Soviet government to the possibility that these flights might interfere with the safety of international civilian aviation, I think the response was that the planes were flying over international waters.

THE MINISTRY

WINNIPEG—ALLEGED STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister. Yesterday the Prime Minister expressed his belief in the cabinet system of government and stated, as reported at page 9730 of *Hansard*:

—I for one have great confidence in my ministers.

Inquiries of the Ministry

I would ask the Prime Minister whether he was expressing that confidence when he said to a Winnipeg audience: "Big deal! James Richardson—I believe you should have somebody better"?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I never said anything of that kind.

Mr. MacInnis: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if that be the case I suggest to the Prime Minister that he take up a question of privilege with the *Globe and Mail*.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

FINANCE

REQUEST FOR LOANS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Bernard Dumont (Frontenac): According to the press release sent to us by the Prime Minister's office, the Prime Minister told the delegates of the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, and I quote:

We know the programs and activities of the federal government have an increasing effect on the development of our cities—

Could the Prime Minister tell us whether the government of Canada could grant the municipalities loans of \$500,000, as the one he has just made to Algeria this very day?

Mr. Speaker: I think the question asked by the hon. member could easily be put on the order paper.

[English]

FISHERIES

REQUEST FOR POLICY STATEMENT FOLLOWING MEETING WITH SALT FISH COMMITTEE

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries. In the light of the minister's announcement of the formation of a salt fish advisory committee, will the minister, following his meeting with this committee in St. John's on June 12, make a statement in the house in regard to his department's policy on the salt fish industry?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): I will certainly give the matter consideration, Mr. Speaker, but any such announcement would have to be after our first meeting with the committee on June 12.