

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether he will seek to verify directly whether this report is correct and whether, as a good friend of Israel, he as a representative of Canada will make direct and forceful representations in this regard. I ask also that renewed efforts be made by the government of Canada to strengthen efforts being directed toward the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. But even if this report turns out to be untrue, as I hope it does, it surely warns us once again of the grave danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I can reassure the Leader of the Opposition on this point. We have the greatest concern, which I know reflects the concern of all Canadians, about this development. May I add that Canada itself has not been participating in any of the scientific work that has been going on in Israel relating to the nuclear bomb. There has been no co-operation between Canadian and Israeli scientists in this field, and we have not been providing any uranium that could be used for this purpose.

[*Translation*]

MAINLAND CHINA—NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD
CANADIAN RECOGNITION

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Would the minister tell the house what progress has been made in the talks with the Peking government with regard to the recognition of Communist China?

[*English*]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that our ambassador in Stockholm will shortly be meeting with the representative of the People's Republic of China in Stockholm.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): I have a supplementary question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Inasmuch as the negotiations with Mainland China may take some time, I wonder whether the minister or the government are giving consideration to the establishment of some interim contact, either in the nature of cultural delegations or possibly of student exchanges in the coming months?

Mr. Sharp: We would welcome in general these kinds of exchanges and if, as the hon.

gentleman suggests, these negotiations are prolonged, I think this might be a very useful initiative for Canada and for the People's Republic of China to take.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Can the minister assure us that the house will have an opportunity to express its views on the recognition of Communist China before the government makes a decision in the matter?

[*English*]

Mr. Sharp: I hope that as many members as possible will express their views so that the decision of the government, when taken, will reflect the opinions of hon. members.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

GOVERNMENT STEPS TO CURTAIL INCREASING COST OF LIVING

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister regarding the figures released today, indicating that the cost of living for the month of April increased from 123.2 to 124.6, which represents an increase of 1.1 per cent for a single month. This is a sharp increase in the cost of living for the balance of this year, if continued at this monthly rate. What steps does the government intend to take to stop this spiralling cost of living which is having such an adverse effect on people generally and particularly those on lower and fixed incomes.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to indicate a series of steps which will be taken and we hope will have the support of this house, because the matter raised by the leader of the New Democratic party and the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings is a very serious one. Apart from the continuing steps we have taken to curtail expenditure and to keep collective bargaining within reasonable limits, we on this side hope that in the budgetary debate, which I take it will take place in a few weeks time, when we announce the composition of the commission on prices and incomes and when we announce to the country our further expenditure cuts, we will have the support not only of the