

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we have been trying to get together with the officials of Ontario for a long time but they have been postponing the meetings because they obviously know their figures are wrong.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, the officials and minister of Ontario have not tried to postpone the meetings. They have been trying to bring about the meetings. May I ask a supplementary question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before the hon. member asks a supplementary, may I say that what I tried to suggest a moment ago is correct as evidenced by the answer that was given. The hon. member asked a question which invited debate. The minister's reply was argumentative. I suggest to the hon. member that he ought to ask a question instead of presenting argument.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I would not like to start a debate. May I ask a supplementary question. Is it not true that the minister's officials have known and admitted privately ever since December that the figures of the Ontario government in its projection are more accurate than those of the federal government, and that the federal government has been trying to cover this up for the last two months?

Mr. Benson: No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hees: The answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. The minister had better get in touch with the Ontario officials and his own and find out what is going on.

Mr. Speaker: Those remarks will close the debate, please.

Mr. Hees: I think the minister had better get together with his boys to find out what is going on.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Churchill has a very important question to ask.

NATIONAL DEFENCE**REPORTED STATIONING OF ARMED FORCES
UNITS ON ARCTIC ISLANDS**

Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence which I thought was supplementary to questions previously asked with

respect to the defence of the North American continent. In view of reports to the effect that plans are under way to establish Canadian Armed Forces units which will be stationed on several of our Arctic islands, is the minister in a position to enlighten the House or will he be making a statement on motions in the near future?

Hon. Léo Cadieux (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, these reports in my view are premature.

An hon. Member: But accurate.

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order that relates to a previous reply, after which I was not recognized, and affects all hon. members of the House who sit closer to the Skyline Hotel than to Your Honour. Whenever a questioner is ruled out of order, the microphone is cut off and we at this end of the chamber miss the interplay that goes on. As a result we miss 90 per cent of the remarks of the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr. Hees: The hon. member missed a great exchange.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Simpson: Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. Although the Minister of National Defence said that the reports I alluded to are premature, is it not true that the Prime Minister made a statement last night to the effect that these units would be set up, as reported on this morning's radio news?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's supplementary is obviously out of order. The hon. member cannot ask a minister to confirm or deny a statement in the form asked.

Mr. Simpson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, my question was directed to the Prime Minister, not to the Minister of National Defence.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is simply asking for confirmation or denial of a statement. Whether it is asked of the minister or the Prime Minister, it is equally out of order.

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PLANNING OF
ARCTIC EXERCISES**

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will it be possible for the Minister of National