

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the advantage of having different parties in the opposition is that if you give them sufficient time, you hear the whole truth. I am glad to hear the other side of the question.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is more than we get from the government side.

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON CULTURAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN CANADA AND FRANCE

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the assurances given by the Prime Minister on Friday last, which have no doubt been brought to the minister's attention, will the Secretary of State for External Affairs give to parliament at an early opportunity a report on the implementation of the Canada-France cultural agreements, touching on the extent of federal contributions, the amounts rendered by France in the form of assistance, and the number of personnel exchanged between Canada and France, with particular regard to the duties and functions of such personnel? At the same time, will the minister deal with the supplementary question which I posed relating to the present status of the France-Canada agreements and their possible renewal?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my attention was drawn to the question asked by the hon. gentleman and I gave instructions to have a report prepared on the operation of the agreement. I have the agreement before me now. It was concluded for a period of five years, and since it was signed in November, 1965, it presumably goes on until November, 1970. It is also renewable automatically, and can be denounced by either party thereafter six months in advance.

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I understand that the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys has a supplementary question.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, would the minister mind answering the rest of the question at the first opportunity?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver East.

[Mr. Broadbent.]

HARBOURS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND CONTAINER BERTH

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the Minister of Transport, but as he is not here and in view of the importance on the question may I ask it of the Minister of Public Works who, being a cabinet member from Vancouver and holding this portfolio, has some connection with harbour development?

In view of the statement made yesterday by Captain Johnson of the Vancouver Harbour Board, that the National Harbours Board officials here in Ottawa have been informed and are aware of the need for a fast decision on the construction of a second container berth in the Port of Vancouver, can the minister inform us whether any decision has been made on this matter; and if not, when will a decision be made and announced to the house?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A question can be asked of the minister only in his ministerial capacity. It cannot be asked of him as a member of parliament for Vancouver.

Mr. Winch: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Public Works handles construction for the National Harbours Board in Vancouver; therefore I think the question is in order.

Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Public Works): In this case an indication was given in Vancouver some months ago by the Minister of Transport that active investigation was under way toward putting equipment into Vancouver to handle this type of freight. Then I think there was an invitation to Japan to see what the requirements might be. The Canadian group was led by Captain Johnson who has now returned to this country, and I think some advice will be available to the department from this source. But my colleague the Minister of Transport certainly made it clear that Vancouver would not be behind in installing the type of equipment which is necessary. That is the policy of the department, and I think it is being pursued.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It seems to me the minister is now replying on behalf of the Minister of Transport, and I suggest this cannot be done, according to the rules.