

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I hope the agreement will be signed very soon. It is a mere formality as there is complete agreement between the parties.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SPREAD OF WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA—RECONVENING OF CONFERENCE OF GENEVA ACCORD POWERS

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding the suggestion by the government of France that the Geneva Accord powers might be reconvened in the hope that it might be possible to stop the spread of the war from Viet Nam into the neighbouring countries of Cambodia and Laos? Has the government of Canada made any representations to the joint chairmen of the Geneva Accord powers, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, with a view to using our influence to have that conference reconvened for the purpose the French government outlined?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker. We have not taken action of that kind. When I was in France the Foreign Minister of that country brought to my attention the initiative being taken by France. Since that time we have had it under consideration to see whether it would be useful for us to support that initiative, but I do not think the multiplication of initiatives will achieve anything.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As a member of the International Control Commission Canada has played a role in the situation in southeast Asia. Has the government considered favourably adding Canada's voice to those who are seeking to have the Geneva Accord powers reconvened?

[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

PROPOSED CREDIT RESTRICTIONS—ACTION OF CERTAIN FURNITURE DEALERS

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Some time ago, the Minister of Finance announced in his budget speech that steps

Inquiries of the Ministry

would be taken, probably during the present session, in view of restricting credit to consumers who make purchases on the instalment plan.

Could the minister tell us whether he is aware of the spectacular advertising now being presented by certain furniture firms, inviting their customers to anticipate the legislation, and could he make inquiries in order that consumers may be protected in this regard?

[English]

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of some such advertising in British Columbia; I am not aware of any such advertising in the province of Quebec. I would appreciate it, if the hon. member has copies of it, if he would send one to me.

INFORMATION CANADA

SELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE FROM AN OPPOSITION PARTY—INDEPENDENT REPORT TO COMMITTEE

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister without Portfolio responsible to the House for Information Canada whether, when the appropriate committee of the House is established, he contemplates recommending or is prepared to recommend that the chairman of that committee be selected from one of the opposition parties?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I have the right to make any such recommendation. I think the estimates of Information Canada have already been referred to a committee and the committee can call for the examination of those estimates at any time.

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the importance of Information Canada and the concern that many in the House and outside have about it, would the minister be prepared to recommend the establishment of an official corresponding to the Auditor General, an ombudsman, if one likes, along the lines recommended by the task force, with particular reference being given to his making an annual independent report to the committee on the work of Information Canada?

Mr. Stanbury: Mr. Speaker, that in particular, was not recommended by the task force, but I would be glad to have any sugges-