

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: Order. I seriously doubt whether the hon. member's question is in order. If the minister can reply briefly, I shall allow him to do so but it seems to me that such a question could normally be placed on the order paper.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): The reply will be very brief, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that Golden Eagle obtained a grant under the former system, with no conditions attached. Under the new act, there is a fundamental requirement that materials be purchased in Canada, when available.

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[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRS**ALBERTA—PROPOSED CULTURAL-EDUCATIONAL CENTRE—POSSIBLE DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION BECAUSE OF SCHOOL DISPUTE**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question for the right hon. Prime Minister arising out of his statement a moment ago with regard to the proposed educational centre in Alberta that the government does not have funds to support every proposition. May I ask the Prime Minister whether this is an appropriate answer in view of the confirmation by cabinet on July 29 of the assertion that "the first to present a proposal for a cultural-educational centre" was the Indian Association of Alberta and that a pilot stage of that proposal would be the first to be considered for approval by the standing subcommittee? Why has this matter not been proceeded with and is it a fact that a condition precedent to going forward with it is settlement of the school dispute in northeastern Alberta with the co-operation of the Indian Association? In other words, is the settlement of that dispute in fact holding up this proposal that the cabinet did in fact approve?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the question is based on what the Leader of the Opposition says is a cabinet document. I repeat that I will not discuss what went on in cabinet and what decisions may or may not have been taken there on the substance of an issue. Of course the government has money to assist Indians. I have just said that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development doubled the amount of assistance to Indians over the past two and a half or three years, so there is money available. I am just saying we cannot give it to everybody all the time right away, and if an association wants to will itself out of existence and do it on television it is perfectly free to do so. It will not exert pressure on the government in that way, however.

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POST OFFICE**NEGOTIATIONS TO AVOID DISRUPTION OF CHRISTMAS MAIL DELIVERY—AGREEMENT ON HIRING OF CASUALS—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT**

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Postmaster

General. In the absence of the Postmaster General can the parliamentary secretary report to the House on the current negotiations under way to avoid disruption of Christmas mail service, and in particular can he indicate whether agreement has been reached to resolve the problem of the hiring of casuals?

Mr. Gerald Richard Cobbe (Parliamentary Secretary to Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge the discussions are still taking place. When official decisions are made I am sure the House will be totally informed by the minister.

Mr. Dinsdale: In view of the urgency of the matter can the right hon. Prime Minister assure the House that the Postmaster General will make a statement on motions so that the growing anxiety in the country with respect to Christmas mail delivery may be allayed?

• (2:30 p.m.)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I certainly will communicate that request to the minister. I believe he is to be in the House tomorrow. I will ask him to give very urgent consideration to that request.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR EXPLOSION BY PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA—SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION**

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It is further to a question addressed to the Prime Minister on Friday. Can the minister advise whether the government has now learned of the Chinese nuclear explosion? If so, can he advise if such information came from the government of China, our own monitoring devices or from the governments of other countries?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have been getting information from a number of sources confirming that there was a nuclear explosion. Some of this information came from monitoring and seismic devices we have in Canada. Other information came from other countries. None of it came directly from the Chinese government.

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GRAIN**LIFT PROGRAM—REQUESTS TO FARMERS FOR REPAYMENT—POSSIBLE COURT ACTION**

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture. Is the government asking some 4,168 western farmers to refund some of the money they were paid under the Lift program, and is the minister going to publish exactly how much money is involved in total?

Mr. Marcel Lessard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, as was said in reply to a