

Inquiries of the Ministry

will the minister indicate whether he intends to bring forward a regular budget in the next four to six weeks?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think we should get rid of the present budget first—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Benson:—by the opposition allowing us to proceed with the business of the House—the government organization bill and the two remaining days of the budget debate and the legislation involved before we have another budget.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**RUMOURED INVASION OF LAOS BY SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding rumours coming from various parts of the world about an invasion of Laos by South Vietnamese troops backed by the American air force. Has the minister received any information from the Canadian members of the International Control Commission, the government of the United States or any other source which he can give to the House on whether such an invasion is actually in progress at the present time?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker. The blackout of news apparently applies to me as it does to everyone else.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Has the minister been in touch with the Canadian representatives of the International Control Commission? If not, will he endeavour to get in touch with them in order that we may obtain some information regarding this rumoured invasion of Laos?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, we are, of course, regularly in touch with the members of the International Control Commission. They do not know anything either about the invasion that is being talked about in the newspapers.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): In view of the serious consequences that such an invasion could have on worsening the already disastrous situation in southeast Asia, is the minister making representations on behalf of Canada to the government of the United States in the hope that any military activity now going on in southeast Asia will not be accelerated and escalated?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I know how difficult it is to get information about apprehended invasions.

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Has the minister been able to obtain any information in this regard from our men in Peking, from Peking's representative here or directly from the Viet Cong?

[Mr. Orlikow.]

[Translation]

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. According to last night's news reports, he is supposed to have had a conversation with the former employees of G. Lapalme Inc. who have been parading in front of the Parliament buildings. Is it true that he invited them to a special banquet where a choice menu will be served?

[English]

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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NATIONAL PARKS**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—ESTABLISHMENT OF SECOND FACILITY**

Mr. Melvin McQuaid (Cardigan): My question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Is it the intention of the government to proceed this year with the development of a second national park in Prince Edward Island and, if it is, what area of the province has been chosen as the site of this park?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, we have no immediate plan for developing a second national park in Prince Edward Island, but discussions are still going on in this regard with the premier of that province.

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[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**UNEMPLOYMENT—PROVISION OF EMERGENCY FUNDS TO PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES**

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): My question should have been directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare but since he is not here today, even though his name is on the roster, perhaps I might direct it to the Prime Minister. In view of the apparent build-up of pressure on welfare offices in Canada and the reaction of the disadvantaged, particularly as expressed in Hamilton, is the government giving immediate consideration to providing emergency funds to municipalities and provinces to enable them to relieve the pressure on welfare funds caused by unemployment?

Mr. Speaker: I have the impression that this question was asked yesterday. I may be wrong and, if I am, the minister concerned might wish to reply. But the hon. member will perhaps agree with me that the question was asked in just about the same terms yesterday.

Mr. Marshall: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the question is more urgent today, and it will become even more urgent tomorrow and every day.