

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that the government of the United States has any intention of imposing such a surcharge. I can say, however, that during my discussions with the Secretary of the Treasury this possibility was discussed between us.

Mr. Hees: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did the minister receive an assurance from the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States that Canada would not be included in any plan to impose a surcharge if one is applied?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, needless to say the Secretary of the Treasury would not deal with hypothetical questions like that. I can only say that Mr. Fowler did not confirm that the United States intended to impose a tax on imports.

Mr. Hees: I have a further supplementary question. The minister has referred to the matter as being hypothetical. Does he honestly not believe that it has considerable substance?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROPOSED CONSIDERATION OF HOUSING BILL AND NATIONAL CAPITAL RESOLUTION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the government house leader. Would he consider the following proposal, namely that in view of the fact that item No. 64 on the order paper, the second reading of Bill No. C-202, may contribute to improving the housing situation, we would be prepared to pass the bill in all its remaining stages in one day if the government would bring it forward. We would also propose to pass without debate item No. 66 on the order paper, the resolution to set up a joint committee of both houses of parliament to examine the progress and programs of the National Capital Commission, so the joint committee can get to work on this matter.

I wonder whether the house leader could indicate to us whether he is prepared to accept this proposal.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to accept the proposal with one amendment, namely that my hon. friend would agree to pass item No. 64 without debate.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

[Mr. Hees.]

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. John Loney (Bruce): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Would the minister inform the house if it is his intention when he meets the national farmers union tomorrow to quote statistics implying that they have never had it so good?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Agriculture): I will quote statistics to show the position in which the farmers find themselves today.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question and the answer are both argumentative.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF EXPORTS OF NICKEL TO U.S.

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am reliably informed that the quickest and most effective way to stop the war in Viet Nam would be to prevent the export to the United States of Canadian nickel, which is so essential to the prosecution of that war.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member should ask a question.

Mr. Herridge: That was just a preface, Mr. Speaker; I am coming to the question now. Would the government consider negotiating an agreement with the United States on terms similar to those offered to France for the export of uranium, and in so doing earn the gratitude of all peace loving people?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, of course Canada exports a great many important materials to the United States. I understand that paper is essential within the context of the question asked by my hon. friend. I do not think the Canadian government would earn the gratitude of Canadians employed in producing these commodities if it sought to restrict these exports to the United States. I am sure this would be the view of the hon. member for Sudbury, who is in the same party as my hon. friend.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the government has