

Inquiries of the Ministry

NATIONAL DEFENCE

**BOMARC BASES—INQUIRY AS TO
OPERATIONAL DATES**

at the earliest possible date consistent with the completion of the accounts. I do not have the actual information but I believe the payment will be made before very long. Assuredly it will be made in advance of seeding, which is one of the occasions most important to the western farmer.

Mr. Argue: A further point in order to clarify the Prime Minister's answer. Will this be the final payment or a supplementary payment in view of the increased price for wheat?

Mr. Diefenbaker: My understanding is that it would be a final payment.

(Translation):

HOUSE OF COMMONS

**SECRETARY OF STATE—REFERENCE TO ACTIVITIES
OF QUEBEC LIQUOR POLICE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State. In view of the statements made by Mr. Lucien Tremblay and Dr. Poirier, which were quoted in newspapers, has the minister any statement to make concerning the activities of Quebec liquor police officers in Bellechasse county during the last general election.

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Order. If I understand the hon. member's question correctly it relates to a matter which, having taken notice of in the press, I would say was not part of the administrative responsibility of the minister who is Secretary of State but is a matter which relates, rather, to his conduct outside the ministerial field. I would suggest to the hon. member for Laurier that, such an inquiry is not appropriate to be introduced in this way as a question.

Mr. Chevrier: May I bring two things to Your Honour's attention—first, the fact that this is a matter which comes under a division of the chief electoral officer and election matters affecting a constituency; second, the fact that the minister has already made a number of statements dealing with the matter. I should therefore think a question as to the statement which he has made would be appropriate.

Mr. Speaker: If the minister volunteers to make a statement on the matter raised, well and good; but I would not find the subject matter to be within the scope of proper questions relating to the administrative responsibility of the government. It is a subject which could be raised in the house in other ways but not by questions relating to the administrative responsibility of the government.

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister advise the house when the Bomarc squadron at North Bay and the Honest John battery in Europe will become operational?

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Minister of National Defence): As far as the dates on which units of this kind become operational are concerned, it has never been the practice to advertise beforehand when those dates would be, and I do not see any good reason for departing from that practice at the present time.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the minister advise the house when either of these units will be armed with either a conventional or a nuclear warhead?

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Speaker, when a decision has been made in that regard, as was indicated in the house last year, the house will be informed of it.

TRANSPORT

**BRITISH COLUMBIA—PURCHASE OF DOMESTIC
ENGINES FOR FERRIES**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. For the information of the house let me say that my question is based on a rather intriguing newspaper report in the *Gazette* of January 15 which bore the headline "Ottawa Advises B.C. to Purchase Domestic Engines for Ferries".

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Herridge: I am trying to be helpful. In view of the fact that according to this report the lowest tender for these ferry engines was submitted by Ruston and Hornsby, Limited, England, and in view of the fact that this action has caused a protest from the United Kingdom trade commissioner who said that this was unfair to British firms and that the Canadian firm would import many of the parts for the engines from the parent company in the United States, is the minister in a position to inform the house of all the circumstances surrounding this report?