

Inquiries of the Ministry

edged three days later, can the Prime Minister say whether the government has given consideration to this request and whether an announcement about it will be made soon?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the government has not given consideration to it. I imagine the matter has been referred to the relevant department, probably the Department of Justice, but there has been no recommendation made to the government yet. I would say as a matter of general policy that we do not like to proceed by way of disallowance of provincial laws. However, I have just said and I repeat that we have not considered this special case in cabinet yet.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary question, may I ask the Minister of Justice whether there is anything he can say on this matter? I addressed the original question to the Prime Minister because the acknowledgement was sent from the Clerk of the Privy Council.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I will be recommending against any action by the federal government to disallow the legislation.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the decision has not yet been taken on this matter, would the Prime Minister and the government also take into consideration a petition which I shall forward to the Prime Minister signed by 221 residents of the Wynyard district in Saskatchewan asking for the same action on the part of the government?

Mr. Trudeau: If the member will forward the petition to me I will of course study it, Mr. Speaker.

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[*Translation*]

FINANCE

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF FIXED EXCHANGE RATE OF
CANADIAN DOLLAR TO ASSIST PULP AND
PAPER INDUSTRY

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

In view of the fact that the buoyancy of the Canadian dollar which is nearly at par with the U.S. currency will force Canadian pulp and paper producers to raise their prices by \$8 per ton effective April 1, is the government considering a new fixed rate of exchange?

Mr. Speaker: It seems the hon. member has put the same question repeatedly in the course of these last few days. If the minister thinks he can add anything today, he might reply to the hon. member for Abitibi.

[*English*]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to add to what I previously said.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

POLLUTION

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—CONTAMINATION OF BEACHES
BY OIL FROM SUNKEN "IRVING WHALE"

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to either the Minister of Transport or the parliamentary secretary. It concerns the recent discovery of oil globules on the north shore of Prince Edward Island, doubtless from the sunken *Irving Whale*. Considering the assurances given last fall that no oil had reached Prince Edward Island beaches, can the minister advise whether his department will look into this serious matter immediately and take whatever precautionary steps are necessary to protect Prince Edward Island beaches and marine life from this putrid and unwelcome pollution? Are there no ecologists over there, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: While the matter is being considered on the government side, the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Malpeque.

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SCIENCE SERVICES

ESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTRY OF STATE OR DEPARTMENT TO DIRECT AND CORRELATE GOVERNMENT
ACTIVITIES

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Is it the intention of the government to set up a ministry of state or a department of government under some other name to direct and correlate the science activities of the government in the near future?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we did indicate in the Speech from the Throne that it would be our intention to set up such a ministry of state. Of course we are waiting on the pleasure of the House to pass the government organization bill before we will be in a position to do so.

Mr. MacLean: Is it correct to assume then that it is not the intention of the government to introduce special legislation to set up such a department, that it will be done under the government organization bill, if it is done?

Mr. Trudeau: That is right, Mr. Speaker. At this time we see no need for special legislation if we can have the consent of the House to pass the government organization bill which has been before the House for some time.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIONS IN CANADIAN
ARMED FORCES

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): My question is directed to the Minister of Labour. It has to do with suggestions in the press to the effect that consideration is being given to permitting the establishment of