

worked along the lines: "Do you favour the red ensign or a distinctive Canadian flag?"

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my hon. friend for having given me notice of his question, and I realize its importance. In a sense every election is a free vote, and in a sense this particular policy was part of the last two election campaigns. It certainly was part of the policy of the party which now forms the government. But I do not think it would serve any useful purpose to have a national referendum at an indeterminate date on this matter. I think it would be better for the government to take its responsibility in the matter by submitting a particular proposal to parliament and then letting the members of parliament, as the representatives of the people, decide it.

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Côté (Chicoutimi): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Could the Prime Minister inform the house whether the government intends to tie in the anthem "O Canada" with the bill concerning the adoption of a distinctive flag, so that this anthem may get official recognition at the same time as the distinctive flag?

[Text]

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, this government is also committed to the policy of asking parliament to approve officially of "O Canada" as the national anthem and I think it should be done during this session of parliament.

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, in all temerity and humility may I address a question to the Prime Minister, and perhaps through him to all members. Important as the flag issue may be, are not the conditions of the people and the country over which that flag flies more important? As the matter of the flag will come up for debate officially at a future time, can we not now get down to the bread and butter business of the people, the business of parliament?

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

STEPS TO MEET REPORTED INCREASE IN COST OF LIVING

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister which is closely related to the previous question. My question arises from the dominion bureau of statistics release on Friday last indicating that the cost of living in Canada has gone up 2.7 points in the

Inquiries of the Ministry

last year. Has the government taken action to deal with this alarming increase, the greatest in five years?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member put that question on the order paper.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Speaker, may I give notice that I wish to debate this matter at ten o'clock tonight.

POWER

PASSAMAQUODDY—SUGGESTED MEETING BETWEEN U.S. PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Prime Minister but on a different subject. Does the Prime Minister favour the proposal that a summit meeting on the Passamaquoddy project be held at Campobello in June between himself and the President of the United States? If so, will he say whether the government will initiate such a meeting?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time this matter has been brought to my attention in the terms referred to by my hon. friend. I will be glad to take this matter under consideration.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

SASKATOON, SASK.—SUGGESTED NAME FOR NEW VETERANS HOME

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Reynold Rapp (Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale): Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Prime Minister but it is not of a provocative character. With reference to my previous question pertaining to the naming of the veterans home in Saskatoon after the late Harry F. Jones, can the Prime Minister now inform the house whether a decision has been made on this matter and, if so, what will be the official designation of this veterans home

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have been in touch with the mayor and municipal council of Saskatoon, and after receiving a report from them confirming a previous somewhat informal approach, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and I discussed the matter and decided it would be, we thought, a well deserved and worthy tribute to the late member for Saskatoon if the veterans home in Saskatoon were named after him and called the Harry F. Jones memorial veterans hospital. Although I speak subject to correction, I think a notice has gone to Saskatoon from the minister to that effect.