

apprised and aware of all objections by the provinces, if there are any, can the parliamentary secretary advise the House whether there have been further representations from the province of Quebec regarding any inadequacies or injustices within the present bill?

Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member no doubt is aware, a series of important conversations have taken place between the Minister of Labour and the provincial Ministers of Labour this week. I will transmit to the Minister of Labour the concern expressed in the House this morning by the hon. member.

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to know that the parliamentary secretary will register my concern. Can the parliamentary secretary assure the House that before we deal with this bill in committee in a definitive way the minister will make a statement regarding the objections, submissions and representations made to him about the bill so that the committee will be aware of the specific problems being faced by the provinces? Can he assure the House that a statement will be made on motions before we deal further with this bill?

Mr. Perrault: Mr. Speaker, now that the measure has been given such substantial support by all members of the House—

Mr. Alexander: Could the parliamentary secretary not answer the question?

Mr. Perrault:—we are moving to the committee stage. At that point a full opportunity will be given to cross-examine the minister on these important points which have been raised. It is not the intention of the minister to avoid any possible problems that may arise. Matters are proceeding very well indeed.

Mr. Baldwin: Which way are you moving, forward or backward?

Mr. Alexander: Mr. Speaker, I quite appreciate the parliamentary secretary's answer although I accept it in the spirit in which it was given. I am asking the parliamentary secretary whether, on behalf of the minister, he can assure the House that a statement will be made regarding the positions taken by any provinces which have found objections within the bill. It is a simple question. Will a statement be made on motions before we deal with the bill?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary might reply to the question briefly, but it seems to me that the hon. member has reiterated very forcefully the question that was asked initially.

Mr. Alexander: I have not been given an answer and I want an answer.

Mr. Perrault: Mr. Speaker, I can only say that this measure is proceeding in a spirit of co-operative federalism and it may be expected that such a statement will be made.

Inquiries of the Ministry

[*Translation*]

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

I should like to ask the parliamentary secretary whether—if the government should persist in wanting to implement this act which will cost Quebec some \$20 million—the government would intend to adopt compensation measures to allow that province, which already has a deficit in that field, to collect funds through other means?

[*English*]

Mr. Perrault: Mr. Speaker, may I suggest to the hon. member that he attend the meetings of the committee so that he may direct his questions at that time to the minister.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to hon. members that we are in a way anticipating an order of the day. As the parliamentary secretary has indicated and as hon. members realize, we are dealing with a bill which is still before the House under consideration. The question asked originally by the hon. member for Hamilton West as to whether a statement would be made on motions was quite in order, but I do not think the matter should be pursued.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

In reply, the parliamentary secretary invited me to attend the meetings of the committee. If the bill were passed, parliament would finally have to commit itself with regard to it and I am trying to avoid that in order for the government to express its views.

Mr. Speaker: The point of order is not founded.

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[*English*]

FLOODS

MANITOBA-NORTH DAKOTA BORDER—ALLEGATIONS OF ACTS OF HOSTILITY BY CANADIANS—DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED DAM

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister of which I have given him notice. It concerns flooding along the American side of the border in North Dakota and on the Canadian side in Manitoba. Have there been any formal complaints from the United States government based on charges by North Dakotans that, as a certain congressman has stated, there have been acts of hostility on the part of the neighbouring Manitobans north of the forty-ninth parallel?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have not been able to study this question as