

Oral Questions

cover the federal tax because the exemption has now been abolished. Can the minister tell us how manufacturers must operate? Is this tax charged on the whole system of double doors or double windows or only on storm doors and storm windows?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we will consider these proposals in detail in a few weeks when the bill is introduced in the House. If the hon. member wants to submit a particular problem to me, I will be glad to consider it, to ask the officials of Revenue Canada who are responsible for the interpretation of the act to examine it and I will give him a direct and clear answer.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, the minister having made this speech, I assumed that he was aware of the details. I have received a few notices from manufacturers and I suggest this is an important matter. What is more, I suggest that this is an urgent matter, for these people must be able to tell their customers on what parts of the storm doors, windows and storm windows the tax must apply, because this decision after all will have a very strong impact on the building sector, on various retailers and suppliers who wonder how they must proceed. That is the reason I am asking this question and I think the minister is now in a position to reply.

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, a great many items are covered by these exemptions. For instance, while all building materials are covered by this special tax exemption to encourage insulation and energy conservation, other materials are not. A great many items are covered, and we must now clearly specify those which are covered and those which are not. However, question period and the House are not the proper time and place to do that. If the hon. member would kindly avail himself of the services of one of our many pages and send me the letter he has with him, I should be delighted to have it reviewed and reply to him as soon as possible.

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● (1432)

[English]

ROYAL VISITS

INVITATIONS TO ROYAL FAMILY TO VISIT CANADA

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council: it has to do with invitations extended to members to the Royal Family to visit Canada which require the acceptance and approval of the cabinet.

In the last few days, since the Prime Minister left for warmer climes, has the cabinet decided on the request of the government of Ontario to have the Queen Mother attend the Queen's Plate and Dominion Day celebrations?

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate receiving the right hon. gentleman's question today because it gives me an opportunity to correct a report which was issued on the weekend, that in some way the government was preventing the Queen Mother from visiting Ontario.

As the right hon. gentleman knows, a number of invitations come in for members of the Royal Family to visit Canada and these have to be considered in respect of the over-all availability of the personage invited. In this particular case, the Queen Mother is being invited to attend the Queen's Plate and possibly some other events in Ontario.

I am sure the right hon. gentleman will recall that last year the same invitation was transmitted, on behalf of the Government of Canada, to the Queen Mother and that, unfortunately, she was unable to come to Canada at the time. At the same time, I would like to advise the House that Nova Scotia also has a request in for the Queen Mother to visit that province in association with the international gathering of the clans.

These invitations have been under consideration, and were probably discussed with the Queen Mother by the Prime Minister on the occasion of his visit to London last week. Upon the Prime Minister's return, it should be possible to have answers as to what the program will be.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the answer which has been given by the Deputy Prime Minister surely indicates that the press has power. Would the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House why, in view of the fact a letter was written to His Excellency the Governor General last July, it was necessary for Premier Davis to write a further letter in October because the Ontario government had not received a reply to its original letter, and why he received a reply in the form of a standard Xerox letter stating that the matter would be placed before the Prime Minister?

How many months does it take this government to make a decision? Surely it cannot be because of a shortage of civil servants. Is this just an alibi, or is it not? How many months does it take to get an answer respecting a matter that a government should be entitled to immediately?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I have not had an opportunity to go over the correspondence which may have been exchanged between—

Mr. Diefenbaker: There was not any.

Mr. MacEachen: —the government of Ontario and the Government of Canada. I do know that the Government of Canada would be very eager to have the Queen Mother attend the events in Ontario and Nova Scotia, and that that invitation has probably been conveyed by the Prime Minister to the Queen Mother. I hope that it will be possible for her to attend these events.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, would the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House whether that inexcusable, one-year