

ada and the United Church of Canada and other individuals and organizations relating to the question of the sale of Ryerson Press Ltd.

Mr. J. A. Jerome (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, this motion is acceptable in so far as the Departments of Industry, Trade and Commerce and National Defence are concerned. However, for the Prime Minister's office to comply, a considerable number of man-hours would have to be assigned to extract this correspondence from the files. Since these man-hours are not presently available, extra staff would have to be employed on a casual basis in order to complete this job. I have been assured that approximately 165,000 pieces of correspondence—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am in doubt whether the hon. member can make an argument as to why the documents cannot be produced. Perhaps the hon. member might briefly indicate whether it is proposed to table the documents or under what conditions or with what reservations the parliamentary secretary would want to proceed.

Mr. Jerome: I was about to say that accurate statistics on the numbers of such correspondence are maintained, and such information could be provided in response to a question on the order paper. The motion is therefore acceptable, Mr. Speaker, except in so far as correspondence from the Prime Minister's office is concerned.

Mr. Speaker: My understanding is that the parliamentary secretary is prepared to table this correspondence or these documents subject to certain reservations which are not entirely clear. I wonder whether the hon. member for Hillsborough would like to ponder the situation and perhaps allow the matter to stand.

Mr. Macquarrie: I will send for the text, Mr. Speaker. Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Shall the remaining Notices of Motions stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mrs. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I have had a motion on the order paper since November 25, 1970, No. 58:

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of the interim report in March, 1968, by Dr. A. Vennema, Director of Canadian Medical Aid in Vietnam in 1967-68 and for copies of any subsequent correspondence between him and the Department of External Affairs.

I wish to inquire as to when I can expect the production of these papers.

Mr. Jerome: With the frequency with which the hon. member has been appearing at five o'clock on Thursdays with Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers, it is hard to believe that some remain unanswered. I will certainly look into the matter.

Inquiries of the Ministry
ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

FINANCE

INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF TAX REFORM LEGISLATION

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the importance of the economy moving forward as vigorously as possible and of removing uncertainties as rapidly as possible, will the minister indicate when he proposes to introduce his so-called tax reform legislation? May it be expected within a month or will it more likely be several months before it is introduced?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): If my hon. friend would spend more time in the House, he would know that I answered this question two weeks ago.

Mr. Stanfield: I would like an answer to my question as of today as the minister changes his mind so frequently.

Mr. Benson: The answer today is the same as the answer I gave when the hon. member was not in the House. I expect to introduce legislation for tax reform some time toward the end of April.

Mr. Stanfield: In view of the concern and uncertainty and the length of time between now and the introduction of the legislation, will the minister reduce the uncertainty and concern by indicating in a statement in general terms at a very early date the extent to which he is prepared to accept the recommendations of the parliamentary committee with regard to tax reform?

Mr. Benson: This is very difficult to do, Mr. Speaker. If I were to indicate in the House what we intend to do with regard to tax reform, on which my hon. friend campaigned for us to withdraw it, I would also have to indicate the details. Several of the provinces have asked me to meet with them before the legislation is drafted. We tried to arrange a meeting this month but this has been impossible. I hope to meet them when a date can be arranged. I do not think it would be possible to indicate a general outline of tax reform without indicating specifics.

Mr. Stanfield: May I express the hope that the attitude of the government toward the taxpayer was not accurately reflected in the remarks made by the Prime Minister to the Lapalme workers yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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THE BUDGET

INQUIRY AS TO PRESENTATION

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): In view of the economic situation and the large-scale unemployment,