

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kissinger did not raise it with me, nor did I raise it with him. I will inquire to see if it was raised in his meetings with other ministers.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I am simply stating the facts and not trying to be sarcastic. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister apparently does not seem to know anything about these matters, I would ask him whether he would request the Secretary of State for External Affairs to seek a first opportunity to make a full statement as to the irritants that are under active discussion between our two countries, including the two matters to which I referred.

Mr. Trudeau: I thank—and I do not mean to be ironic—the Leader of the Opposition for the suggestion.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**RECONVENING OF JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE AND INVITATION TO APPEAR BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT LEGISLATION**

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Prime Minister. Yesterday I asked the Prime Minister with regard to two specific cases; one, the joint sub-committee which is meeting today and tomorrow to hear from a number of prominent Canadian businessmen, and whether or not action will be taken by this government to ensure that adequate representation will be given to the new policy initiative taken in foreign investment before this important sub-committee; second, he indicated he would also look into the matter of the reconvening of the joint ministerial committee which has not met since 1970.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, may I deal with the first question. It is my understanding that this committee of the United States Congress is meeting because they are considering a similar kind of legislation to our own. We have had no request from the administration to have any officials there. The secretariat of the committee did inquire whether it would be appropriate to have a Canadian official appear before the committee and we said that in accordance with long-standing practice it would not be appropriate. There are some inquiries going on as to whether academics or businessmen from Canada might wish to attend.

STEPS TO RECONCILE VIEWS OF AMBASSADOR PORTER AND THOSE OF THE ADMINISTRATION ON CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, in view of the very different governmental situation that exists in Washington compared to our own with divided responsibility between the administration and Congress, and in view of Ambassador Porter's remarks which specifically were directed toward the growing sense of unease in Congress and in the media and as a result of the minister's answer concerning the lack of participation in this important sub-committee, I am wondering whether the Prime Minister

can indicate what steps are being taken to reconcile the statements made by Ambassador Porter, later confirmed by the State Department, with the views of the administration apparently presented to him over the last few months by President Ford and Secretary Kissinger.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, I can only refer to the preamble as stated by the hon. member and say that it does not reflect the facts as they exist. Since yesterday's exchange in the House my office communicated with the White House and our Secretary of State spoke with Secretary Kissinger in Paris. It is quite apparent to me that the facts are as I stated them in the House yesterday, that Ambassador Porter was not conveying a message from the administration as the hon. member indicates in his question.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): I have a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I did not put the question clearly enough. I was asking whether or not the Prime Minister had taken steps to ascertain whether or not the views taken by the Congress and the media in the United States are such as presented by Ambassador Porter and confirmed by the State Department, in view of the importance of the congressional decisions or developments which might take place in that country during a presidential election year.

Mr. Trudeau: Well, Mr. Speaker, I must again take exception to the question as asked when the hon. member says it was confirmed by the State Department. Mr. Speaker, I assure the House my information from the administration, from the White House and from the source I indicated in Paris is to the contrary.

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ANTI-INFLATION BOARD**PRE-NOTIFICATION OF PRICE INCREASES—REASON FOR USE OF TWO PER CENT AS BENCH MARK**

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance arising from the announcement made by Mr. Pepin yesterday. I should like to ask the minister why it was decided that a 2 per cent bench mark figure would be used in the case of pre-notification for increases in prices for products in a particular product line but there was no percentage or bench mark given in the case of individual products. I would ask the minister why that decision was made and why also it has been left up to the companies on their own initiative to decide when a significant increase has occurred in the case of an individual product.

Hon. Donald S. MacDonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, without having discussed this with the board, and given the fact that the board is exercising the discretion given it by the government, I cannot give a full explanation of all the terms or the decision taken by the board in this regard. This has obviously been done on their own judgment. I would assume from it that this reflects in part the degree of difficulty involved in having to monitor what could be literally hundreds or even perhaps thousands of