

Oral Questions

Can the minister advise whether he is going to reveal this information on motions, whether it will be as a notation in a budget, whether we will get it from Treasury Board, or will we have to ask the Auditor General to make a special report on this matter?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, those figures are made public when we present our budget.

Mr. Clark: When is that?

Mr. Chrétien: We will be presenting a budget. If the hon. member wants to put a question on the order paper, I will see if I can reply.

An hon. Member: When is the budget?

Mr. Chrétien: Soon.

DISCOUNTING OF LOAN FLOATED IN NEW YORK

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Finance. As the loan that the government is now floating in New York is already being discounted, may I ask the minister if he anticipated this unusual and disconcerting event?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the dealers who handle the bond issue which went on sale this morning report that it has been very well received in the marketplace.

[*English*]

Mr. Ritchie: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the further loss of \$400 million in foreign reserves so far this month, does the government intend to have further foreign borrowings, especially as the Prime Minister will be delivering his "We are broke; let's be kind to the bankers" speech tonight in New York?

Mr. Chrétien: First, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is using figures that do not exist.

Mr. Stevens: We have not been wrong yet.

Mr. Chrétien: We will reveal at the beginning of next month the amount of reserves we have. In the middle of the month there is no such figure being circulated.

[Mr. Kempling.]

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT APPROVES HON. LAURIN'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION OF OFFICIALS' CHILDREN

Mr. Irénée Pelletier (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Following last Saturday's visit in the Eastern Townships of Quebec Cultural Development Minister Camile Laurin, and his statement regarding the federal decentralization program to the effect that the government of Quebec would be willing to give federal civil servants coming into Quebec six years during which they could send their children to English schools, could the Acting Prime Minister tell the House if he has read the text of Mr. Laurin's statement and if the federal government agrees with that suggestion?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, yes I have read Mr. Laurin's statement. Regarding the move to Sherbrooke, our request that the Quebec government allow public servants affected by that move to send their children to English schools is the same as the request we make to other provincial governments whenever there is decentralization: we require that they provide French education to public servants moving to their cities. The request is the same for the province of Quebec as for all other provinces; furthermore the move will not occur for another six months. It is the government's intention to decentralize over a long period of time and public servants have the right to send their children to schools teaching in their mother tongue if they want, otherwise, pursuant to the commitments given to the House, we will not allow decentralization.

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[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

MIDDLE EAST—CANADIAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Would the minister comment on the veracity of the front page story in the *Globe and Mail* today concerning the commitment of troops to Lebanon. The article quotes the Prime Minister as saying:

Canada, if asked, will send a battalion of combat troops into southern Lebanon.

Is the Acting Prime Minister in a position to inform the House whether that statement is the policy of the government?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I did not read the statement made by the Prime Minister. I know the Prime Minister had discussions with the Secretary General of the United Nations yesterday, and that he is prepared to help in the circumstances. There was an exchange