

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Lundrigan: Can the minister indicate when the government plans to make this type of representation?

Mr. Davis: After my visit to Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker.

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HOUSING**INQUIRY AS TO INCREASE IN SALES TAX ON BUILDING MATERIALS**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the future minister of state responsible for housing and urban affairs. As any further impediment to the housebuilding industry would be disastrous, can the minister advise the House whether the government is considering seriously raising to 12 per cent the building materials sales tax?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister without Portfolio): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Alexander: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In light of that, I hope and trust that the minister will use his good influence in order to advise the Minister of Finance to be more responsible.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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WATER RESOURCES**BENNETT DAM—CRITICISM BY MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF PLANNING—GOVERNMENT POLICY**

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Was the Minister of the Environment in his Edmonton speech expressing government policy when he criticized the planning that went into the Bennett Dam on the Peace River, which has resulted in much ecological damage to the Mackenzie River Delta?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member who asked the question knows that questions relating to ministerial speeches outside the House can only be directed to the Prime Minister or Acting Prime Minister in the form of inquiries as to whether those speeches represent government policy.

Mr. Harding: Mr. Speaker, may I direct the question to the Acting Prime Minister? Shall I repeat it?

Mr. Sharp: Yes.

Mr. Harding: Mr. Speaker, was the Minister of the Environment in his Edmonton speech expressing government policy when he criticized the planning that went into the Bennett Dam on the Peace River, which has resulted in much ecological damage to the Mackenzie River Delta?

[Mr. Davis.]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister was expressing a view. It is not a matter of government policy whether a provincial government has mismanaged affairs. However, he may have a view on the subject.

Mr. Baldwin: How about the federal government?

Mr. Harding: Mr. Speaker, may I direct my supplementary to the Minister of the Environment. Is the minister planning on introducing amendments to the Navigable Waters Protection Act which will force all Crown corporations to be subject to the provisions of the act and to ensure that adequate surveys are carried out before any dam construction commences?

Mr. Davis: Mr. Speaker, the Navigable Waters Protection Act comes under the Minister of Transport.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question period expired a few moments ago, and I am sure the hon. member for Edmonton West is anxious to proceed with the next order of business.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I am also interested, unless the time has expired, in something that affects my province a great deal.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must suggest to the hon. member that the question period expired about three minutes ago. Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**THE BUDGET****FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE**

The House resumed, from Friday, June 18, consideration of the motion of Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can get my thoughts on the record now. During the question period I wanted to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether his predecessor had not weighed the requirements of the Navigable Waters Protection Act in his indecent haste to get the consent of the Premier of British Columbia to the Columbia Treaty negotiations. The answer would be very interesting.

With regard to the matter at hand, I wish first to raise a matter of procedure because I think this is the first time this situation has presented itself to the House and to Your Honour in this particular way. I refer to the revision of the Standing Order respecting the business of ways and means which went into effect in January, 1969, and which, I say to Your Honour for Your Honour's consideration, may have restricted the presentation of