

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

CANADA-V.S. MINISTERIAL MEETING—
DISCUSSION OF INTEREST RATES
AND INFLATION

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Finance. Following the meeting with the United States authorities, does he maintain that it would be possible to find some solutions to the problems of interest rates and inflation, in a tangible way, in the near future?

[English]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, at the meeting I was very impressed with the determination of the secretaries present representing the United States government to tackle this problem with all the effort they could put forth, and they in turn congratulated the Canadian government for the work we had already done in this direction.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

CASHING OF OUT-OF-TOWN CHEQUES WITHOUT
BANK EXCHANGE CHARGE

Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. In view of the great profits that Canadian banks are making and in view of the fact that about 95 per cent of United States banks cash all out-of-town cheques at par, would the minister appeal and recommend to the Canadian Bankers Association that all out-of-town cheques be cashed by Canadian banks without bank exchange being charged?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to bring the hon. member's representation to the attention of the Governor of the Bank of Canada. I think that the benefit of cashing all out-of-town cheques in the United States in the way he has described is offset at least to some degree by the requirement of maintaining balances.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR CONSENSUS BEFORE ACTION ON
POLICY STATEMENT—FUNDS FOR
NATIONAL COUNCIL

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In the light of the very grave concern expressed by a number of represen-

tatives of the Indian people with regard to the policy announcement he made in the house the other day will he give a firm assurance to the house and to the country that no steps will be taken until there has been the fullest consultation with the authorized and responsible representatives of the Indian people and, hopefully, a consensus reached?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to give that assurance to the hon. member.

Yesterday afternoon, I spent two hours with some of the leaders of the Canadian Indian Fraternity and we reached an agreement. It is obvious that we will have consultations at the national and regional level in the future, and I am convinced that the Indians will understand that this policy is meant to offer them greater participation in Canadian society.

[English]

Mr. R. R. Southam (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In light of the clear request by the Indian people for the right to conduct their own consultations, will the minister say whether he intends to have money made available to the National Indian Council on Indian Rights and Treaties in order that they may carry out their own responsibilities in a way that will ensure the Indian people a greater sense of participation?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, we have been having consultations for a year now and we intend to continue having them in the future.

As for the committee mentioned by the hon. member, I can say it will work in co-operation with the new claims commissioner who should soon be appointed. He will be authorized to provide the committee with funds to pursue its work.

[English]

INDUSTRY

AUTOMOBILES—DISCUSSION WITH TRADE
UNIONS ON PACT EXTENSION—
DISPARITY IN PRICES

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.