

government intends that there shall be legislation at this session on the subject of election expenses?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I would be glad to consider referring the report to the appropriate committee; I see no reason why that should not be done. As to the latter part of the question, I doubt whether we shall have an opportunity at this particular session to deal with this matter, but I certainly hope we shall be able to deal with it before the next election. Of course that gives us a good deal of leeway.

[Translation]

HOUSING

INQUIRY AS TO FURTHER GOVERNMENT ACTION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Raymond Langlois (Mégantic): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the hon. Minister of Labour.

In view of the surprise and concern displayed by the various provincial ministers of finance on hearing the recent announcement that the rate of interest for housing loans would be increased up to 8½ per cent, is the government considering, in the near future, to change or to alter its position and to bring about some other solution that could help and improve this situation?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon member is now asking a question that might more conveniently be put in the course of the debate which is going to take place this afternoon.

[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

CONSTRUCTION OF ACCESS ROUTES THROUGH ALASKA PANHANDLE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development whether talks are under way or are to be undertaken with the government of the United States with regard to the construction of new access routes through the Panhandle to tidewater.

Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): There has been a great deal of publicity about additional means of access through the Panhandle. The unfortunate thing is that there seems to be no practical additional access as such. There are no discussions going on at the

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Inquiries of the Ministry

present time with the United States in respect of obtaining further access through the Panhandle. We have been engaged in discussions in respect of the Haines highway, and we are making a very worth while contribution in respect of those matters in which we have a particular interest at Skagway.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development about access through the Panhandle. I should like to ask the minister when he will be making public the report of the study group which I believe was appointed by his predecessor or perhaps by himself on the question of access through the Alaskan Panhandle.

Mr. Laing: Mr. Speaker, there was not in my time anyone appointed to make an investigation concerning the possibility of access through the Panhandle. There is a committee which was appointed by myself about four years ago in respect of northwestern transportation. This committee makes reports to the government. These reports so far have not been made public.

FORT SMITH—INQUIRY AS TO HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. William Skoreyko (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question I should like to direct to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Can the minister inform this house when he expects tenders to be called for the construction of 30 houses, prefab or precut, at Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker: Order. This question could be placed on the order paper.

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ABSENCE FROM CHAMBER OF MEMBER FOR YUKON

Mr. Auguste Choquette (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order under standing order 6, due to the fact that the member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) has been exercising his right to speak in the last few days even though he has been away from this house for one year.

This is quite serious, Mr. Speaker, because I feel parliament becomes a huge joke if this fact is overlooked.