

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Trudeau:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Such meetings have already begun and I believe they are in progress at the present time. This is one of the reasons why the Minister of National Health and Welfare is not in the house just now. Premier Strom and myself are aware of the two ministers' meeting and may I repeat that it is going on right now.

**Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, in reference to the previous question and to a statement made yesterday by the premier of the province of Quebec, could the Prime Minister tell us whether the province of Quebec has been consulted about those negotiations with the provinces?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, there are no negotiations with the provinces. It is for those who wish to take advantage of the federal legislation to negotiate the terms with us as well as the date of its coming into force. On behalf of the government, I am willing to say publicly to Premier Bertrand that the more he will hasten to discuss with us the coming into operation of medicare in the province of Quebec, the more we will be pleased.

**Mr. Fortin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question.

Could the Prime Minister tell the house if the province of Quebec has officially refused to participate or if it is willing to discuss the matter with the federal government?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to reiterate to the house that before the legislation was passed, the province of Quebec had expressed through its government its intention to participate in the medicare plan. The federal government passed the law as a result of those consultations. Of course, the province is free to change its mind but the federal legislation remains in the statute books and in force.

[English]

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****MAINLAND CHINA—DISCUSSIONS IN SWEDEN AS TO RECOGNITION**

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs if he can tell us how the negotiations are going on in Sweden between Communist China and Canada's representatives with respect to the recognition of Communist China, and whether he might tell us something of the peek-a-boo performance that took place there the other day when the Canadians were required to

demean themselves because the Communists were not sure they were entitled to credibility.

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** The only part of the question to which I can give an answer is the first part, that is that negotiations are going slowly.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I asked the second question because I wanted to join the hon. member for York West (Mr. Givens). Did the minister read the other day that the hon. member for York West complained that, when we want to get information, the way to get it is not in parliament but outside in front of the TV cameras?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS****BATH-MILLHAVEN FEDERAL PRISON COMPLEX**

**Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** Mr. Speaker, my question arises from the authorization given by the Minister of Public Works on Tuesday, February 25 that restitution be made by Argo Incorporated, general contractors on the Bath-Millhaven federal prison contract for n.s.f. cheques issued for labour by the now extinct subcontractor, D. Leblanc Incorporated.

Since there are also some n.s.f. cheques from the same firm now held locally for services to the personnel of this company, will not the minister also recognize these for restitution?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member is making a submission which he has to assume will be taken into account. If he feels the matter should be discussed further, he might have a second try at putting the question, in view of the fact that it has already been discussed at the time of adjournment, a few weeks ago.

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** I will bring it up again at ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS****REPORT RESPECTING GROCERY PRICES ON PRAIRIES**

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Did the minister attend a meeting with the attorneys general of the three