

Inquiries of the Ministry

should try to move along a little more quickly. The hon. member for Fraser Valley West.

[Translation]

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Charlevoix on a point of order.

Mr. Asselin: The hon. Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce indicated to me that he could have been asked the question and that he knew the answer. Can the minister answer the question I asked?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This was not a point of order. May I suggest to the hon. minister who knows the answer to give it to the hon. member after the oral question period.

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[English]

FLOODS**BRITISH COLUMBIA—INQUIRY AS TO COMPENSATION FOR LOSSES**

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment perhaps I might address this question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the Minister of Veterans Affairs, accompanied by at least two government backbench acolytes, last week visited areas of British Columbia which have been inundated by reason of unusually large spring run-offs, has the government received any recommendation from that minister regarding compensation for losses because of the flooding?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as I reported to the House yesterday, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo have visited the areas concerned. I reported to the House that the policy of the federal government is to consider such claims for compensation after a request has been made by the province concerned. I reported yesterday that as of the moment no such request had been received.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, I should like a little clarification because there was a lot of racket and I did not quite get the reply. Is the government of British Columbia, in concert with the federal government, considering methods of relieving the financial losses caused by such disasters not only in the area of Kamloops but should they occur elsewhere?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I answered this very question yesterday when it was asked by the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary. Perhaps the hon. member for Fraser Valley West was caught in the flood. The answer, I repeat, is that the government is prepared, as it has been in the past, to consider any general plan which might be

[Mr. Speaker.]

put forward by the provinces, but there has been no such request by the province of British Columbia.

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[Translation]

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY**MEASURES RESPECTING PAYMENT OF DEBT**

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Transport.

Would he tell the House what arrangements the government has taken or is to take concerning the St. Lawrence Seaway? Will the government find a way to collect \$300 million, or will there be an arrangement to make a clean sweep of this amount plus interest, since it has become impossible for the Authority to meet its commitments?

Mr. Speaker: This question, also, is very general. It seems to me that such a question should normally be put on the order paper. If the hon. member deems the matter to be an urgent one, it can be discussed on the adjournment motion.

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[English]

INDUSTRY**ESTABLISHMENT OF PETROCHEMICAL CENTRE IN SARNIA—INQUIRY AS TO DIRECT ASSISTANCE BY GOVERNMENT**

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Has the government under consideration any direct assistance to the new world-scale petrochemical industry in Sarnia that is to be conducted by Esso, Polymer and DuPont?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I was going to answer a previous question on the same subject by saying that this project, SOAP, and a couple of others are presently being studied by the government but no decision has been taken. To answer the previous question at the same time, let me say the interests of Quebec will be taken into account in this study; there is no doubt about that. The provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce was anticipating the possibility of a decision and was entering a caveat.

Mr. Bell: Will the minister give the further assurance that all similar industries, particularly in New Brunswick, now under consideration will receive equal and fair treatment.

Mr. Pepin: Certainly. The problems of the petrochemicals industry vary very much from one region of Canada to another, as hon. members would expect.