

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

slightly after noon today a telephone call saying that he was in the hospital, and that he was forbidden to leave for some period of time. He asked if we could postpone the federal-provincial conference. I undertook to consult the various premiers and Prime Ministers of the provinces to see if they would agree to such a postponement. I sent telegrams to that effect about an hour ago.

**INDIAN AFFAIRS****PROPOSED NATIVE TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP POLICIES**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister and ask whether he is giving consideration to the proposal made to him by the National Indian Brotherhood to appoint a task force consisting of Indian people to develop new policies, leaving the development of major responsibilities for Indian matters to the Indian people themselves.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, I did not understand the question. I wonder whether the hon. member would repeat it?

[*English*]

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** The question has been discussed among the minister, the Minister without Portfolio and myself, Mr. Speaker. We are not as yet convinced that this would be the most effective way of arriving at a policy which would be to the greatest advantage of the Indians. However, it is a matter that is under consideration.

**Mr. Orlikow:** A supplementary question. I wonder if I could ask the Prime Minister whether he is giving consideration to recognizing the National Indian Brotherhood as the advisory body to the government on matters pertaining to the Indian people, as proposed by the National Indian Brotherhood.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, we consider that the National Indian Brotherhood is a step in the right direction. We encourage the Indians to form provincial associations and we also think that it is advisable for them to have a national association. That is why we invited them to meet here last week and I must say to the hon. members that the meeting with the Indian chiefs was very successful.

[*English*]

**Mr. Orlikow:** The minister did not answer my question whether the government was giving consideration to recognizing the National Indian Brotherhood as the advisory body on behalf of the Indians in Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, of course, if we recognize the existence of the National Indian Brotherhood, it is normal that we should wish to consult them as often as possible.

[*English*]

[*Later:*]

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Has the government agreed to a request from the National Indian Brotherhood for financial assistance in carrying out community development programs and other activities?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, this request was made by the National Indian Brotherhood.

We are now considering this suggestion.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****CZECHOSLOVAKIA—INQUIRY AS TO PROTEST NOTE FROM RUSSIA**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, as suggested to me last week by the Prime Minister, I wish to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs a question.

Has Canada received from Russia a note of protest similar to that received by Great Britain in view of the discontinuance of cultural exchanges with Czechoslovakia? If so, what position will the Canadian government take about that note of protest and related comments?

[*English*]

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of any such note of protest having been received, but I will make inquiries.

**THE CANADIAN ECONOMY****STEPS TO MEET INCREASE IN COST OF LIVING**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a