

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

would entail for the provinces, has the federal government indicated that it is prepared to participate in this matter in some meaningful way?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** No, Mr. Speaker. The matter has not been raised yet with the federal government, to my knowledge.

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**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****POSSIBLE CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS WITH GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Since there is a considerable measure of detente in central Europe, and since the Federal Republic of Germany has itself entered into more direct relationships with the German Democratic Republic, has the Canadian government given consideration to entering into closer relationships, particularly trading relationships, with the latter government, the East German government?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that question is, not any official recognition. We are prepared, of course, to trade with the people of the GDR, but I do not believe, and I think this view is shared by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany, that official recognition would forward the detente that we all seek.

**Mr. Brewin:** Has the government given any consideration to establishing a different basis for trade relationships with East Germany?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, we have no objection whatever to trading with the German Democratic Republic. I do not believe it would be in the interest of the promotion of progress toward a detente in Europe if any action were taken that would create the impression that we were about to recognize the German Democratic Republic officially.

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**INDUSTRY****CONSTRUCTION—SUGGESTED REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON BUILDING MATERIALS**

**Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Finance concerning the recent statement by the president of the Canadian Construction Association in which he expressed concern about the 1971 prospects for the industry. Since activity in that industry has fallen far short of the government's predictions, would the minister be prepared to consider eliminating the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials as a first step toward boosting the construction industry?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the outlook for the construction industry in 1971 is pretty good.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

[Mr. MacDonald (Egmont).]

**WELFARE****ASSISTANCE TO COURTS IN LOCATING DESERTING HUSBANDS AND ENFORCING SUPPORT FOR WIVES AND CHILDREN**

**Mr. Rud L. Whiting (Halton):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Since the minister is meeting with his provincial counterparts this week, will he discuss the possibility of setting up machinery so that information regarding the whereabouts of deserting husbands and fathers can be furnished to provincial courts in order to assist them in forcing these men to support their wives and families?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I realize that this appears to be an important matter. I suggest that if there is urgency it can perhaps be discussed at the time of adjournment. I doubt whether the question as asked is in order at this time.

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**POLLUTION****PROVISION OF ADEQUATE TREATMENT FACILITIES IN CHURCHILL FOREST INDUSTRIES PROJECT**

**Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry. In view of the minister's concern expressed in the House on January 12 with regard to the inadequacy of pollution controls at the Churchill Forest Industries project, may I ask what action the hon. gentleman has taken to deal with this matter?

**Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** Mr. Speaker, I am meeting next week with the responsible provincial minister.

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**INFORMATION CANADA****REPRESENTATIONS FROM PUBLISHERS OF ORIGINAL CANADIAN BOOKS RESPECTING ASSISTANCE**

**Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister without Portfolio in charge of Information Canada. May I ask him whether he has received representations from Canadian publishers of original Canadian books requesting government assistance? If so, has the government given consideration to those requests? Also, when may we expect a statement in the House on government policy concerning this matter?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Perhaps the latter part of the hon. member's question is in order in the sense that he asks whether a statement will be made on motions. A reply may be made to that part of the question.

**Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, there is no present intention to make any statement on motions. As the minister responsible for federal government publishing, as well as for certain programs of encouragement of national identity and solidarity, I have been interested in meeting with Canadian book and periodical publishers in order to explore their problems. But in dealing with—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I do not think the statement should be made now; it should be made on motions.