

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** That is exactly what I am doing, Mr. Speaker. I am repeating what is the position of the government. The hon. member for Ontario then said:

Then I shall put the direct question, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether medicare is to start on July 1, 1968.

To which the Prime Minister replied:

Mr. Speaker, that is so under the law and the legislation we passed, in which no change has been made.

**Mr. Douglas:** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the statements the Acting Prime Minister has just quoted were all made prior to this matter being submitted by the Minister of Finance to his cabinet colleagues following the federal-provincial conference of finance ministers last week, may I ask the Acting Prime Minister whether there has been any change in the government's position since these statements were made, and whether we may take it that the government intends to proceed with medicare on July 1, 1968.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** The Prime Minister's statement certainly answers that question.

**Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington South):** I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Would he care to advise the house as to the number of representations he has received asking him to postpone medicare?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I do not think this question is in order.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance? Could he tell us whether the federal government is considering a fiscal compensation for the provinces which will not benefit or will not want to benefit from the medicare plan as from July 1?

[*English*]

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance):** No, Mr. Speaker, there is no provision for any such payments.

**Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich):** I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Will the method whereby the cost of medicare will be raised be contained in the mini budget which is to be presented early next week?

**Mr. Sharp:** Until we know which provinces are going to take advantage of the legislation

it would be impossible to make an estimate of the amount of revenue needed. Therefore I do not contemplate making any provision in the statement I shall be making next week.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Grégoire:** Mr. Speaker, may I put a further supplementary question to the Minister of Finance? If there is no question of a fiscal compensation, could the minister tell us whether the federal government will grant any compensation to the provinces which do not have at present the financial means to participate in the medicare plan?

[*English*]

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, at the present time the federal government has the most generous system of equalization payments this country has ever known to support the position of the provinces, including the province of Quebec.

[*Translation*]

**EXPO '67****INQUIRY AS TO INSPECTION OF FOOD**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Chapleau):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the hon. Minister of National Health and Welfare. Could the minister tell the house whether the food, and particularly the meat sold and eaten at Expo '67, was checked by officers of his department and whether other people besides the inspectors of his department were allowed to use inspection stamp No. 110?

**Mr. Speaker:** I suggest to the hon. member that he should put this question on the order paper.

[*English*]

**SHIPPING****MONTREAL—INQUIRY AS TO FEDERAL INTERVENTION IN DISPUTE**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke):** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Since the slowdown in the St. Lawrence ports is now being felt all the way back to British Columbia, can he report on the situation there today?

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I must regretfully advise the house that the situation on the Montreal