

Inquiries of the Ministry

[English]

INDIAN AFFAIRS**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON TRIP TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I want to welcome him back from his south seas holiday. It is nice to see him again.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yewchuk: Could the minister indicate if he will be making a statement on motions to report on his trip?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege.

I have visited many countries for the benefit of Canadians, and I know that the hon. member deeply resented not being chosen by his party as a member of the delegation.

[English]

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Speaker, I still want to know whether the minister will be making a report to the House of Commons by a statement on motions.

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I intend to discuss my trip to New Zealand and Australia before the Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development, where I will be able to have very useful exchanges with the members of the committee.

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[English]

FLOODS**REGINA—FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): I was going to direct my question to the minister in charge of the Post Office but as he has stepped out of the chamber I will direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Since it appears that recent flooding conditions in Regina were contributed to by a more rapid run-off of spring water caused by the greater acreage of summerfallow encouraged by Operation Lift last year, will the federal government give consideration to assisting the province of Saskatchewan and local communities—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that his question is asked in the form of an argument.

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YOUTH**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—ALLEGED DELAY IN SUPPLYING INFORMATION TO MANPOWER CENTRES**

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): I wish to direct my question to the Minister of National

[Mr. Chrétien.]

Defence. In view of the fact that information on the student militia and civilian employment phase of the Opportunities for Youth program has not yet reached Manpower centres, even though it was indicated that it would be done early in April, will the minister investigate this situation in order to avoid similar delays under the works projects and report to the House at the earliest opportunity?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): My understanding is that it has been circulated Mr. Speaker, but I would be glad to check on the hon. member's allegation.

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AIRPORTS**STE. SCHOLASTIQUE—JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE BETWEEN FEDERAL AND QUEBEC GOVERNMENTS CONCERNING PROJECT WORKERS**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): I wish to direct a related question to the Prime Minister in view of the fact that a question regarding manpower has been raised. My question deals with the recent report to the effect that constitutional hangups have shut down the biggest project in Quebec, the Ste. Scholastique airport, and my understanding that the jurisdiction of the federal government regarding manpower has been challenged by the province of Quebec. How long has the government been aware of this situation and what means has the government at its disposal to resolve this very serious problem?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure that the first part of the question is in order but certainly the second part is. Perhaps the Prime Minister may want to reply.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Certainly, Mr. Speaker. We have been aware of this very regrettable problem for several months. There has been a long series of meetings with Quebec officials to try to resolve this problem. I hope it will be satisfactorily resolved. It is an almost nonsensical situation when there are so many unemployed—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau:—that because of a constitutional quarrel workers are not working on this very large and important project. The point of view of the federal government has been made known to the province of Quebec. We have repeatedly indicated our desire to go ahead with the project. Of course, we have no authority over labour laws in the province. We are trying to get the province of Quebec to find a solution which would be in the best interests of the workers.

Mr. Alexander: In light of the fact it appears that the province of Quebec denounces the authority of the federal government in this very touchy area, is the Prime Minister in a position to advise the House what further steps are being contemplated if the province of Quebec