

Inquiries of the Ministry

Regional Economic Expansion. Will the minister consult with the premier of Newfoundland and try to get the various DREE projects moving in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and try to prevail upon the premier to stop hoarding up these projects in order to spring them at the propitious political moment in this provincial election year?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

FOREIGN AID—INQUIRY AS TO SHIFT IN POLICY AND ASSISTANCE TO NORTH VIET NAM

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Was Mr. Gérin-Lajoie stating government policy when he announced last weekend that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is asking whether an official of the government is stating government policy when he makes a statement. I have to tell the hon. member that a question asked in those terms is not in order. It has long been a recognized rule of the House that it is possible for an hon. member to ask the Prime Minister whether a statement made by a minister represents government policy, but I would suggest that if hon. members ask questions on whether statements made by public servants represent government policy we may get ourselves into difficulty. From day to day the whole question period might be used for that purpose. Would the hon. member rephrase the question?

Mr. Nesbitt: I realize Your Honour is quite right but I thought a question about a statement by such a senior official might be accepted. Is it government policy to have a large shift in emphasis in our foreign aid programs and, in particular, is it government policy now to advance foreign aid to North Viet Nam?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any proposals to grant aid to North Viet Nam.

GUYANA—STONING OF CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): I wish to direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister. Does the minister have any information to impart to the House and the country on the stoning of the residence of our ambassador in Guyana over the weekend and, in particular, has any communication come from the Guyanese government? Also, are the property and lives of Canadians in danger?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): I understand that our High Commissioner has been in touch with us and has said that he was completely unharmed. He said he got a little less sleep than usual.

[Mr. Peddle.]

YOUTH

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—ATLANTIC PROVINCES' UNEMPLOYMENT—ALLOCATION OF FUNDS ON BASIS OF NEED

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State regarding the Opportunities for Youth program. In view of the recent information that projects worth \$150 million had been submitted up to that time and as only \$14.7 million is available, will the extremely high unemployment rate in the Atlantic provinces, the highest in the country, be taken into consideration when projects are approved?

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was always understood that the funds available for this program would be distributed in such a way as to provide greater help to those areas of the country where unemployment among the young is greater. And that is what we are doing at the present time with regard to the distribution of available funds.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DISCUSSION WITH UNITED STATES ON BUILDING OF DAMS ON PEMBINA RIVER

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs of which I have given him notice. It concerns the building of a series of dams on the Pembina River as a joint effort by the Canadian and American governments. Is any action being contemplated to reintroduce discussions on what has turned out to be a very important matter?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have an answer somewhere to this question. Perhaps I might be permitted to search for it.

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COMMUNICATIONS

ALLEGED SUPPRESSION OF FREE EXPRESSION OF VIEWS BY PRESS IN QUEBEC—SUGGESTED INVESTIGATION BY COMMITTEE OF HOUSE

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): My question is directed to either the government House leader or the Minister of Justice. It arises out of the conference of the news media, the press, over the past weekend and the controversy surrounding the question of the suppression of free expression of views in the province of Quebec put forward in a document entitled "Dossier F". Has the government considered having this general question studied by a parliamentary committee, perhaps the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, so that these charges can be examined in some depth?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): No, Mr. Speaker.