

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CONSIDERATION OF INVITATION TO JOIN ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister with reference to a statement he made a few weeks ago in Jamaica, to the effect that the Canadian government would seriously consider an official invitation to join the Organization of American States. In view of the statement that before long Canada should become a member of the O.A.S., made a few months ago at Banff by the Prime Minister, I should like to ask him whether the government has made the decision that it will accept an invitation to membership in the O.A.S. if such invitation is proffered.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in my discussions with the Prime Ministers of the two countries to which my friend refers this matter did come up, but in the expression of Canadian policy and attitude toward membership in the O.A.S. I did not go beyond the statements which had previously been made except in one respect. I suggested to the two Prime Ministers that it might be useful if the three countries, Canada, Jamaica and Trinidad-Tobago, should exchange information and, if possible, try to act in concert if an invitation to join that organization were received.

Mr. Douglas: I have a supplementary question. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he can give this house the assurance that before any commitment is made by the Canadian government this matter will be referred to parliament.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I do agree that in respect of a matter of such importance, before the government takes a final decision it should be discussed in the house.

Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich): I have a supplementary question. Can the Prime Minister assure us that this matter will be referred to the external affairs committee before a final decision is made by the government?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I should like to think that the external affairs committee would also be interested in this matter and would have an opportunity of discussing it. So far as my answer is concerned, this matter falls within the responsibility of the government to the House of Commons. I have indicated that the matter should be discussed in the house before a final decision is taken.

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

EXTENSION OF FRENCH RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICES IN WEST

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh).

In the last few years we have requested repeatedly that the French radio and television network service be extended to Western Canada, that is beyond the Rocky Mountains.

Is the Secretary of State in a position to tell us today whether these services with regard to the C.B.C., will be extended to our people in British Columbia and Alberta?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): No, Mr. Speaker, I am unable to say yes or no today.

[English]

BROADCASTING

INQUIRY AS TO CONSIDERATION BY HOUSE COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address my question to the Secretary of State. I should like to ask the hon. lady whether it is the intention of the government to establish a committee on broadcasting to permit the study of the Fowler report with particular reference to the urgent need for broadcasting legislation.

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, this matter is under consideration by the government. I am sure all hon. Members will agree that broadcasting is a matter of such moment to all individuals in this country that benefit could be derived from another study by a committee of this house.

FINANCE

RESTRICTIONS ON OPERATION OF U.S. SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES IN CANADA

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. When he made his statement on December 6 last approving the guide lines laid down by the United States government for the operation of American subsidiaries in Canada, was he aware that these guide lines would restrict the operation of these companies in Canada and thereby adversely affect the growth of the Canadian economy?