

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT—POSSIBLE WAGE AND PRICE FREEZE**

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Finance.

Can he tell the House whether it is his intention to recommend a price and wage freeze in order to curb inflation and bring down the unemployment rate?

[English]

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): If any such step were to be taken by the government it would be announced in the House.

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CORPORATE AFFAIRS**PRICE INCREASES IN CANADA BY AMERICAN-OWNED COMPANIES BUT NOT BY PARENT COMPANIES IN UNITED STATES**

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): I should like to ask the Minister of Finance whether he is concerned and what he intends to do about American-owned companies which are unable to increase the prices of their products in the United States because of the price freeze there but are increasing their prices in Canada? Does he intend to do something about it and is he concerned about the problem?

Mr. Bell: Probably not.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has put his question.

[English]

I am not sure that the question is supplementary to the one asked by the hon. member for Compton. The question will be allowed if the minister wants to reply briefly, and then we will go to another subject.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): I will bring the matter to the attention of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

[Translation]

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I stated a moment ago that we would try to pass on to a second subject and, for that purpose, the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Egmont.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TEST—STUDY OF SECRET REPORTS RELEASED BY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT—DIRECT CONTACT BY PRIME MINISTER WITH PRESIDENT**

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): My question is for the Prime Minister. In light of the publication yesterday of a

[Mr. Benson.]

secret report by the top environmental council to the President of the United States that the Amchitka test potentially could cause an earthquake and tidal waves, what steps has the Prime Minister taken to ascertain the importance of this report and its validity and, if so, what is his response?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): It is because of the possibility, although we think it is remote, of disturbances of this kind that we made our first protest to the United States and have protested in various forms since then.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Would the Prime Minister indicate whether or not anyone in his office or anyone in the office of the Minister of the Environment has taken the opportunity to study this and the other reports that have not been made public? If so, is there any attempt being made, even at this late hour, by the Prime Minister to exercise his normal right of office with respect to communication with the President?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of the Environment reported to the House some time ago, we had our own scientists look into this matter and their views apparently are not dissimilar to those contained in the report. It is on the basis of their views that we have made our views known to the American government.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether there is a communication problem, but twice I have asked directly whether any governmental officials in this country have looked at these reports and, if so, do they add any further information, and will there be further representations? Perhaps I could get a straight answer to that question.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the latter part of the question, whether there is any further information, the answer is straight—yes, the minister responsible for the environment has had information of his own. As to whether this particular report has been looked at by anyone in my office or in the minister's office, I will inquire.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): As a supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Again I invite the co-operation of hon. members so that we may move on. I will make a determined effort to have as many questioners as possible included in the question period today, but if we are to achieve this I hope we will have as few supplementaries as possible and that they will be brief and will be answered briefly.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, in view of this report and the mounting concern throughout the country over the proposed test on Saturday, will the Prime Minister now reconsider his view on this matter and communicate the concern of the Canadian people directly to the President of the United States?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, my own position has been made known on this, but I hope that members of the Official Opposition who are protesting U.S. action on this