

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Benson: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing I would like to do more.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Was his difficulty in communicating with the members of the Canadian Bankers Association that, while they were happy as a matter of politeness to have him speak to them, they were not really interested in speaking to him?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Villeneuve—

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): For Témiscamingue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I apologize to the hon. member for Villeneuve.

[English]

I believe the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar has a supplementary, and I will allow him one supplementary

[Translation]

— Then, I shall recognize the hon. member for Villeneuve—I mean for Témiscamingue.

[English]

REDUCTION OF FARM IMPROVEMENT LOAN
AND FARM CREDIT INTEREST RATES

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, may I address my supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture. In light of the reduction in the Bank of Canada interest rate recently, has the Farm Credit Corporation accordingly reduced its interest rates, and have the banks also reduced their rates under the farm improvement loans legislation?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance would have to answer for the Farm Improvement Loans Act. So far as the Farm Credit Corporation is concerned, I believe we adjust the rates every six months depending on the rate that the government is paying for money during that period.

[Translation]

INDUSTRY

GOLD MINING—POLICY RESPECTING GRANTS

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

[Mr. Lewis.]

Since the unpegging of the Canadian dollar, owners of gold mines are in a distressing situation because they are losing \$1.50 per ounce and I would like to know if the minister intends to announce soon an increase of subsidies, a measure which would enable the mines to maintain their normal operations?

[English]

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I recently met with representatives of the gold mining communities and the Canadian Mining Association, who discussed with me the continuation of the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act and also the current problem and the accentuation of the problem as indicated by the hon. member. We have in my department a comprehensive study of the effect of the removal of the subsidy. I have instructed the officials to hasten the completion of this study in light of the current situation and the difficulty caused by the freeing of the dollar. I hope we will be able to have a government decision as a result of that study very soon.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED RECOGNITION OF COMMUNIST CHINA

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. We have not had a report for some time regarding the deliberations that were taking place between representatives of Communist China and Canada. In the Far East the general idea is that the reason these consultations have not been continuing is that virtual agreement between Communist China and Canada has been arrived at but the government of Canada does not intend to make an announcement in that connection until Parliament is on vacation. Is this correct? I bring this up on this happy day when all of us are in good spirits having regard to what happened in the land of "Heath". I ask the minister whether he will now give us a reasonably full report, not of that length which would require it to be made on motions, but will he tell us—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I take it that the question has been asked. I might add that it was also asked yesterday, but in view of the very special circumstances I think hon. members would want the Secretary of State for External Affairs to reply to the question.