Inquiries of the Ministry

[*English*]

Mr. McGrath: Can the minister assure the House that a statement will be made on this most important matter before the end of the year?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, I fail to see why a statement should be made. There will undoubtedly be some information to give the House as the programs are set up with the co-operation of the provinces.

[*English*]

INFORMATION

REPLIES TO QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, have the Prime Minister and his colleagues taken note of the recommendations of the task force on government information which state there is a specific need for the government to provide more informative replies to questions raised in Parliament than has been the tradition and, if so, what does he plan to do about it?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we plan to announce government policy regarding the task force recommendations before the end of the year. I hope we will be supported by the opposition in respect of these plans in order that we may commence an operation to be called Information Canada. With regard to the questions asked in the House and the answers given to these questions, we will undertake to give more informative answers as soon as the questions become more informative.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, has the Prime Minister, in the meantime, taken refuge in silence, and are his ministers' refusing to answer questions regarding this embarrassing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I seek the co-operation of hon. members. I should remind them that there are only three or four minutes of the question period left.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CHANGES IN CANADIAN DIPLOMATIC ESTABLISHMENTS

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, I was going to say something about the number of times members in

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]

this row have tried to get the floor to ask questions—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will assume that the hon. member has not said anything.

Mr. McIntosh: I should like to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It arises out of the minister's announcement that Canada is to close a number of missions abroad. Will the minister say whether the action taken to close any of the Canadian missions that have been closed or are about to be closed was the result of requests from the countries involved and, if so, have these requests had anything to do with the present efforts of Canada to recognize Red China?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): The answer to that question is no, Mr. Speaker, unless one were to consider the attitude taken by the Cambodian government toward the International Control Commission as a request for us to withdraw.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, my question is based on the fact that cancer is a disease which annually claims the second highest number of Canadian lives. In view of the important research work being done by the National Cancer Institute of Canada in attempting to eliminate this killer, will the minister assure the House that he has not and will not terminate the government's important financial support to this work, as has been rumoured in various quarters?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, representatives of this very worthwhile organization were in to see me this morning, at which time I gave them the assurance that support would be given next year. I did not give them anything definite as to the amount.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

FUTURE OF FAIREY OF CANADA PLANT

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion whether he is in a position to answer the question I asked last week about direct aid or negotiations between authorities in his department and Fairey of Canada, in light of the very serious situation and the plight of a number of families?