

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, we have said many times, of course, that after getting out of controls we do not want to have another AIB. It will be the role of the Economic Council, in such case, to look into prices and wages and to make comments or recommendations, with absolutely no power to roll back in any way, shape or form or to in any way go into the market place. As far as the decision is concerned, we said to the premiers at the first ministers' meeting that we would make the proposal to the Economic Council of Canada. We have made that proposal to the council, but a final decision has not been reached: that is why I am not in a position to elaborate today.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, given the fact that there is no representative of labour on the Economic Council of Canada at the present time, will the government appoint the Economic Council of Canada as the monitoring agency after the expiry of the AIB, even though it does not have on it a labour representative?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, we will give a definite answer on this matter after a decision has been made. Naturally, we hope that the Canadian labour representatives will return to their seats at the Economic Council of Canada. This constitutes a means of consultation between the different sectors of our society, labour, government and business, and we hope that they return to their seats. On this subject, I think Mr. Morris said that they were studying the matter, but it is up to them to decide. They decided to leave, we did not ask them to do so; that decision was taken by the Canadian Labour Congress and not by government.

● (1117)

[English]

CONSULTATION WITH CLC ON MONITORING AGENCY

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, given the fact that without the co-operation of labour, the post-control situation obviously cannot succeed, and given the fact that labour is not represented on the Economic Council of Canada, I ask the minister whether the government consulted the Canadian Labour Congress prior to designating the Economic Council of Canada as the successor of the Anti-Inflation Board.

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): On many occasions we have discussed post-control policy with the CLC. A few weeks ago, before the first ministers' meeting, we had two meetings to discuss the kind of body we should have. At that time we were talking of a monitoring agency, and following the premiers' conference we had the view of the CLC about that agency. This is a new proposition which has come from the provinces, and we are awaiting finalization of the decision by the Economic Council of Canada.

Mr. McGrath: Is the minister telling the House that there was no consultation with the Canadian Labour Congress after

the decision had been made at the first ministers' conference to appoint the ECC as the successor of the AIB? Is that the position the government has taken? If so, given the fact that there is no labour representation on the Economic Council of Canada, can the minister tell the House how we can expect anything from this agency in the area of voluntary restraints, without labour consultation or representation?

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, we have had several opportunities to consult with labour and we try to do so as often as possible. They themselves opted for leaving the Economic Council of Canada, that was not our decision, they can return anytime, and it is our hope that they do so as soon as possible. But it is up to them to decide, as we cannot force them to sit at the Economic Council of Canada. I want to reiterate that on several occasions I and more often my colleague the Minister of Labour have consulted the Canadian Labour Congress and other labour organizations in Canada on the topic of post-control policy.

[English]

Mr. McGrath: This is quite an extraordinary situation when we consider the fact that in order for the post-control period to have any chance of success, there must be full labour input and co-operation. Given the fact that the controls will be coming off approximately one month from today, or at least in the middle of April, is it the intention of the government to call in the leadership of the CLC to get their co-operation in the post-control area, and to ask the CLC if they will now go back to the ECC? Does the government intend to do that and, if so, when?

Mr. Chrétien: Not only do we intend doing that; we have done it.

Miss MacDonald: When?

Mr. Clark: With what effect?

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GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

USE OF GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT BY CABINET MEMBERS— OVER-ALL COST OF WESTERN TRIP

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister. Can my friend, the Deputy Prime Minister, confirm the press report that at least four of the government's JetStar aircraft are being used this weekend, at the expense of the taxpayers, to fly most of the members of the cabinet around the prairie provinces in what is clearly blatant election campaigning?

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): How can the minister justify this expenditure of public funds, in view of the fact