

of the fact, indicated by the Prime Minister's answers, that the government has abdicated its responsibility either through fear or ineptitude, will the government House leader be prepared to consult with the other House leaders in order to permit the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway, plus such amendments as may be moved to it, to be brought forward soon and brought to a vote so that the House may have an opportunity to fill the vacuum left by the government's inaction?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister may reply to the question, but the hon. member for Peace River, I am sure, will be the first to recognize that the question is not asked in procedurally correct terms.

FOOD PRICE INCREASES—SUGGESTED SUBSIDIES TO FARMERS AND ON IMPORTS TO CONTROL COST

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that the recent cost of living increase announced today is to such a large extent caused by the increase in the cost of food, will the minister and the government give consideration to the advisability of government subsidies on food prices both for the farmer producing food in Canada and on the large amounts of food imported into Canada on which no controls could have any effect?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the procedure that the government has adopted, of course, is to meet the problem the hon. member brings up by increasing the disposable income of Canadians by tax reductions and by eliminating one of the cost factors of food by taking off the sales tax on every item of food and drink except alcohol.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the organization of the food industry is such that distributors, wholesalers and retailers work on percentage mark-ups when the cost of the product at the farm level goes up the percentage goes up, would the government give serious consideration to a system of food subsidies which would eliminate increases of this kind?

Mr. Speaker: That also is a representation.

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STATISTICS CANADA

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE NO CHANGE IN CALCULATION OF CONSUMER, INDUSTRIAL SELLING AND WHOLESALE PRICE INDICES WITHOUT PUBLICATION OF DETAILS

Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I have a question which is further to a question I asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I notice he is not in the House. Perhaps his parliamentary secretary could answer for him. I have given written notice of the question. Recently I asked the minister a question regarding possible changes in the basis and procedures for calculating the consumer price index, the industrial selling price index and the general wholesale price index. I ask

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the minister now whether he will assure the House that no changes whatsoever will be permitted in the bases of these indices without publicly specifying the nature and details of the changes involved and simultaneously publishing the previously used bases and figures for a period of one year?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Acting Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, as acting minister I will be glad to take notice of the question and have my colleague answer it on his return to the House.

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INCOME TAX

REQUEST THAT FARM LAND EVALUATIONS FOR CAPITAL GAINS BE MADE AVAILABLE TO FARMERS

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue. Would the minister make available to farmers the evaluation assessments made by departmental appraisers or by those working on behalf of the minister?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps what the hon. member is referring to is not what he and others have been calling valuations but rather information being gathered for a real estate data bank which will assist taxpayers and the department in arriving at valuations on disposition of property. The kind of information that is being gathered, for instance, is the address, the legal description, the sale price, terms of sale, the municipal assessment, the dimension of the land and buildings and the income and expenses at the time of sale where relevant. So, obviously this is mostly available to the buyer and most of it actually comes from public records and observation.

APPRAISALS FOR CAPITAL GAINS TAX—POSSIBILITY OF VERIFICATION BY DISTRICT TAXATION OFFICES

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary I should like to direct to the Minister of National Revenue. In light of the fact many Canadians have already paid for appraisals to help them determine valuation-day values of their assets, particularly real estate, and many other Canadians are wondering whether or not to do so because of the capital gains tax provisions, will the minister undertake to provide some forum, possibly through the district taxation offices, so that these Canadians can have their appraisals officially verified or otherwise?

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, that is not possible within the resources available to the department. I think the hon. member would not want such a proliferation of bureaucracy that would permit it. It is not possible to do that for farms any more than for any other assets that might be subject to capital gains tax. The valuation has to be made at the time of disposition, and we will help all we can through the real estate data bank to make sure that information will be available so that fair valuations can be made at that time.