

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Speaker:** The House has heard the motion of the hon. member. Under the provisions of Standing Order 43, this motion requires the unanimous consent of the House. Is there such unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is not unanimous consent; the motion therefore cannot be put.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

## THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

## ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—REACTION OF PUBLIC TO PROGRAM AND POSSIBILITY OF CHANGES

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the Prime Minister's statement that widespread public acceptance and co-operation is necessary to the success of his restraint program, and taking into account the observation made in the media by at least some journalists who have been travelling with the Prime Minister during the last couple of days that the program is off to a shaky start, would the Prime Minister give the House his own brief assessment of the public reaction he encountered in the country?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. If this can be done under the rules I would gladly report briefly on my travels to Saskatchewan and Manitoba over the past two days, and gladly report from time to time. I am going to spend some time in Toronto tomorrow and next weekend in Quebec.

**Mr. Speaker:** Particularly at this stage of the question period I am reluctant to interrupt this process, but it seems to me that the question asks for an opinion and reaction in respect of the Prime Minister's visit. This is a question between the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister. I hesitate to interfere, but with reluctance I think I have to ask the Leader of the Opposition to be a little more specific.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I shall not argue the point. I thought it would be very useful to the House to have the Prime Minister's very brief reaction to what he encountered. On the eve of the legislation probably being referred to the committee, can the Prime Minister tell the House if he has any initial impression of changes which may be necessary to make the program more acceptable to the country?

**Mr. Trudeau:** I can answer that briefly, Mr. Speaker. Certainly at many of the meetings I had as part of the consultation on the guidelines and regulations to be applied, I had reactions which could be classified under two groups. The first group, which roughly concerns businessmen, professional groups, people in financial areas and people in the trades, asked brief questions concerning

[Mr. Beaudoin.]

how the guidelines would apply to them in their particular businesses. If I can judge and reflect fairly on this opinion, they were well prepared to support the government on the principle. They wanted to make sure that in detail it would be workable and practical.

The second type of reaction is one I had in meeting with one labour group in Regina, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. They indicated quite clearly in a written brief that they submitted to me, which I am sure can be submitted to the Leader of the Opposition, that they were in favour of price controls but not wage controls. They thought wage controls, as they appeared in our program, would be effective but that price controls would not. I discussed this with them for some time and indicated that we wanted the price controls to be effective, as well as controls on other incomes than on wages, and that we would be happy to implement that intention by modification if necessary of the guidelines and by strengthening the regulations. I urged them to be constructive in their suggestions. Since they started with the suggestion that price controls were necessary, I pointed out to them that price controls indeed were a part of the guidelines. If they could not be implemented in the present form I urged them to make constructive suggestions to me.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, would the Prime Minister indicate if he has reached any conclusion concerning whether any changes are necessary to make the program more widely acceptable, and would he indicate in a very brief way what the nature of those changes might be?

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, Mr. Speaker. The meeting took place yesterday. I indicated to them that of course in meetings such as this we were looking for concrete ways to make the guidelines more workable, that we knew there were some difficulties which had to be solved, that it would be some weeks before the regulations would be published and that we would want to hear from members from both sides of the House at the committee stage and that therefore they had a little while to make their suggestions. We, of course, are working all the time to implement better guidelines. I would just add that so far as I was able to judge, the farming communities of Saskatchewan were four-square behind these guidelines.

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## PUBLIC SERVICE

## DATE OF ORDERS IN COUNCIL APPROVING SALARY INCREASES FOR EXECUTIVE CATEGORY

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Prime Minister. Bearing in mind the maximum \$2,400 guideline ceiling on salary increases, would the Prime Minister indicate on what date orders in council or a Treasury Board decision were recorded establishing up to \$6,500 per annum increases for top public servants, an increase ten times the amount of the minimum \$600 guideline figure for low income workers and an increase higher than the annual personal earnings for 40 per cent of the taxpayers in this country?