

Canadian dollar which indicates that we face a mini-recession? Surely, he must be aware of the analysis and the figures. Is he now prepared to recommend to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, that serious consideration be given to the bringing in of an early budget?

Hon. Jack Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, as the parliamentary secretary has so admirably indicated in his, I think, full and comprehensive answer, the paper referred to by the hon. member is in all probability in draft form and will not be ready until December. It would seem to me to be appropriate to wait until we have a final version of that report. In the interim, I have concern about unemployment and I am making my own moves in that particular area.

REPORT OF OECD INDICATING REMEDIAL MEASURES NECESSARY

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Draft report or no draft report, the cat is out of the bag. Things are tough. We are facing a mini-recession. Does the minister not accept the statement of the OECD that remedial measures must now be taken or the slowdown will be much worse in 1977. Does he accept that statement in the OECD draft or not?

Hon. Jack Cullen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. member knows, being here from the class of '68, that he is asking the minister for an opinion on a particular area and that is not appropriate. I think I would like to read the report in its final form, and then come to some conclusions at that particular time rather than jump the gun.

Mr. Alexander: Am I to understand now that the minister, together with the Treasury front benches, will not take any action until it suits them politically? Is that what we are talking about?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

DATE OF CONFERENCE WITH PROVINCIAL PREMIERS— CONSULTATION WITH QUEBEC

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister I will put my question to the Acting Prime Minister who, I understand, is the Minister of Labour today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: We are in real trouble.

Mr. Broadbent: We might even get more reasonable answers today.

Oral Questions

I should like to ask the Acting Prime Minister if he would confirm that a letter has gone out from the government of Canada to all the provincial premiers informing them of the federal government's desire to hold the first ministers' conference on December 13 and 14.

Hon. John C. Munro (Acting Prime Minister): Yes, I believe so. That is my understanding.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: That is the best statement we have heard.

Mr. Broadbent: Given the fact that the newly elected premier of the province of Quebec had earlier publicly requested the government of Canada not to hold the conference in December but to put it off until January in order for him to be prepared to discuss the serious issues involved, could the Acting Prime Minister—after he gets information from the minister behind him—tell the House whether or not the government of Quebec was consulted about the date for this conference and whether the newly elected premier of the province of Quebec has agreed to have this conference in December?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I would advise the leader of the NDP that there has been an exchange of correspondence. The new minister of finance for the province of Quebec will be participating at the finance ministers' meeting in December. No request to hold off the first ministers' meeting has been received as yet.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

POSSIBILITY OF PROPOSALS TO PROVINCIAL PREMIERS TO AVOID ANTICIPATED RECESSION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Given the important nature of this conference and the OECD report which has already been referred to this afternoon forecasting a recession in 1977 if new stimulative measures are not taken, could the Acting Prime Minister tell us if new proposals will be brought before the provincial premiers at that meeting in order to head off the anticipated recession?

Hon. John C. Munro (Acting Prime Minister): It has already been indicated by my colleagues and the parliamentary secretary that that is not the final report. We have to wait until we get the final report before we reach any conclusions with respect to it. But I would think the leader of the NDP must have noted that the Bank of Canada has lowered its interest rates, and, we hope, that will have a significant impact. He is probably also well aware of the fact that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration will be announcing direct employment programs designed to have a noticeable impact on unemployment.