

Inquiries of the Ministry

Would he tell the House how he intends to divide between the provinces the \$50 million ear-marked to promote the teaching of a second language, or, rather, which steps he will take to enable each member state of the federation to benefit equally from it? Would the province of Quebec be treated differently in view of its special situation?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is seeking information which should normally be given to the House by way of a statement on motions.

[*English*]

AIR TRANSPORT**CRASH AT LABRADOR CITY—AIRPORT
EQUIPMENT**

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Transport. Is the minister prepared to make a statement in the House concerning the circumstances of the tragic plane crash yesterday at Labrador City and can the minister, either now or in a subsequent statement, assure the House that this airport is adequately equipped with GCA equipment and DOT personnel to man it?

Mr. Gérard Loiselle (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): In answer to the question put by the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, the department started to look into this matter yesterday. I will be pleased to inform the hon. member of any further information, and when the department will have a report.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS**GASOLINE AND HEATING OIL PRICE
INCREASES—INQUIRY AS TO
INVESTIGATION**

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the serious effect on the standard of living of Canadian consumers caused by the price increases in gasoline and heating oil just announced by Shell Canada Limited, would the minister suggest to the Prices and Incomes Commission that they make an early investigation of these price increases?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that the price increase announcement made by that company is inflationary and a danger to the Canadian econo-

my. I regret very much that the company saw fit to make these price increases. I have endeavoured to make clear, as explained in the House many times, that the Prices and Incomes Commission is independent and entitled to look at this or any other question as it thinks necessary.

Mrs. MacInnis: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the minister, in view of his reluctance to advise the Prices and Incomes Commission of his opinions, whether he would now consider setting up a prices review board under his direct control to investigate these increases which keep occurring with rather alarming frequency?

Mr. Basford: First of all, Mr. Speaker, may I say that at one point the House wanted an independent body, but I am delighted with the hon. member's confidence in me since she now feels I should have direct control. I will certainly consider that.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. Are we to assume from his answer and from the view he has expressed with regard to this price increase that either he or the government are now expressing opinions as to specific restraints that should be applied, indicating what is appropriate to particular conditions, rather than simply calling for a general exercise of restraint?

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, any general call for restraint must, of course, involve individual companies and price decisions, and I was commenting on one this morning.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary question. I understood what the minister said very well. What I was asking him was whether the government is now doing what the Prices and Incomes Commission says it is unable to do in the absence of a consensus, namely, to indicate what does, in effect, constitute restraint in a particular circumstance?

Mr. Basford: In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, what constitutes restraint is companies and others making private decisions not to increase prices. I think I have made that very clear for some time.

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister intend to do anything about the specific promise he made last August to investigate prices in the automotive industry?