

Oral Questions

increasing the production base, thereby the supply, thereby lowering the unit cost, thereby moderately affecting the pricing base. As for the hon. gentleman's reference to profits, I believe an objective study of the figures which are being shown to the country every day would indicate that, while profits have increased, more funds than are represented by those profits are being reinvested by business in capital expansion. These are the figures, and those are the intentions. Dividends paid after tax have dropped sharply over the average for the past decade. In other words, profits are being used to increase the capital industrial base of this country, thereby increasing employment prospects and moderating the price structure.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: Every time the Minister of Finance is asked this kind of question he makes the reply of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, which does not surprise me. I wish to ask a supplementary question—a final supplementary, I suppose, for me. In view of the fact that some members of the opposition are hesitant about using the review procedure provided in the law, in order to win support for the legislation of the same members, would the minister himself initiate a review by the House of the tax measures before we continue to make hundreds of millions available to the corporations at the expense of the ordinary Canadian taxpayer?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I am far more interested in the jobs these measures are producing. I want to say to the hon. gentleman that I am less interested in the business community than I am in the new jobs they are producing in this country. I want to say to him also that it would not have mattered what had appeared in that report: he and his party had already taken a position before they ever saw the report.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order, please. The hon. member for York South rises on a point of order. The hon. member for Peace River rises on a point of order. I suggest this is becoming a debate between the minister and the hon. member for York South. We should try to return to the question period. The hon. member for York South rises on a point of order.

● (1440)

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I was merely going to say that if the minister was going to make a speech, I would demand equal time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Peace River has a point of order.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that this pillow talk should take place outside the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps we might return to this debate later.

[*Translation*]

If the Minister of Finance does not have any objection, we will now return to questions and answers and, for this

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

purpose, the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Charlevoix.

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COMMUNICATIONS

CABLEVISION—INQUIRY AS TO AGREEMENT WITH QUEBEC

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I should like to put a question to the Minister of Communications.

Can the minister tell us whether his department or himself have arrived at an agreement with Quebec concerning the request made by this province in respect of cable television? If so, what does it consist of?

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Minister of Communications): No, Mr. Speaker, there is no agreement on this matter; moreover, I made a statement in this House on motions, about a year ago, concerning the federal government's views on the Quebec Act 35 and the orders that resulted from it.

Mr. Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Since there seems to be lack of agreement between Quebec and Ottawa on this matter, is the minister prepared to make it a test case before the courts?

Mr. Pelletier (Hochelaga): Mr. Speaker, we have chosen another avenue of agreement with the provinces. We have chosen to meet them one at a time. I am going to start tomorrow and then we will bring them together to see if it is possible to come to an agreement that both complies with federal government jurisdiction and meets provincial needs. I shall report to this House after the consultations have been concluded.

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[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NOTE TO UNITED STATES CONTAINING PROPOSALS
RESPECTING OPERATION OF ALASKA-CHERRY POINT OIL
TANKERS—ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs is supplementary to the questions of my colleague from Esquimalt-Saanich. As the reports of the secret note indicate that the government is suggesting or recommending alternative routes to Cherry Point, and since you can only get to Cherry Point from the open sea by going either north or south of Vancouver Island, the southern route being very dangerous and the northern route impossible, what alternative routes is the government considering?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like, first of all, to correct what the hon. member has said. It is not a secret note; otherwise I would not be giving an undertaking to table it. The hon. member will see from the note when it is tabled that we have suggested changes such as those suggested