

Oral Questions

Mr. Stanfield: A final supplementary. Has the Prime Minister received an assurance from the premier of Quebec that it is the intention of the province of Quebec to co-operate with the policy as outlined in the white paper? I ask this question with regard to the province of Quebec simply because of press reports to the contrary today.

Mr. Trudeau: The answer is clearly an unequivocal no-yes, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: Why don't you just compromise with "maybe"?

Mr. Diefenbaker: The truth will out!

Mr. Trudeau: It might be best to compromise by saying that the premiers will speak for themselves. I indicated previously what transpired at the private meeting we had. It was not up to me to say what position they had taken. I think I am free to say that the province of Quebec indicated a genuine willingness to co-operate with us in fighting inflation.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE**EFFECT OF ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM ON CHOICE OF LONG RANGE PATROL AIRCRAFT**

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of National Defence is supplementary to the question of my leader. The minister stated on October 10, 1973 in a self-styled "new era" speech that:

National Defence will be increasing dramatically the amount of money being spent for new capital equipment.

Since 1968 we have been awaiting the choice of a new long range patrol aircraft only to see it confused with the question of a new interceptor and the restructuring of the Canadian air industry. Will the minister inform the House how the new program of restraint will affect the choice of the LRPA, if the choice has been made and, if so, the general terms of the contract?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, major decisions on procurement are before the cabinet at present in the form of the forces structure review and when the decisions have been reached they will be announced in the usual way.

CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO COLLECTIVE SECURITY OF EUROPE—ROLE OF CF-5

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister stated his agreement with the need "to play a useful part in the collective security of Europe." Will the minister inform the House how he intends to acquire the capability to make such a contribution, and does the minister expect to be taken seriously when he suggests that the CF-5 is being considered as an alternative to the purchase of the F-15 or F-16?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I said in Brussels and here, and the Prime Minister said before the NATO heads of government, that Canada intends to maintain the level of its contribution to the NATO alliance. The form in which we are to do that is being considered as part of the structure review to which I have just referred. There is no suggestion that the CF-5 would replace the F-15, the F-14 or some next generation fighter, but that does not mean we should not make use of the CF-5 which is an excellent ground-support tactical aircraft.

* * *

AGRICULTURE**REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION OF INTENTION OF ANTI-INFLATION BOARD TO INVESTIGATE MARKETING BOARDS**

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture, who is just entering the chamber. In view of the buffoonery indulged in yesterday and statements made by Mr. Pepin and Mrs. Plumptre at a press conference yesterday which clearly indicate a bias against agricultural marketing boards and the intention of the anti-inflation review board to give top priority to the investigation of agricultural marketing boards, will the Minister of Agriculture tell the House if the government intends to allow the controls program to destroy the best mechanism which agricultural producers now have for ensuring that their prices are related to costs of production? If not, if that is not the government's intention, how does he interpret Mr. Pepin's statement of yesterday?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I said before and I say again, a well-run marketing board has nothing to fear from anyone.

An hon. Member: You don't know Beryl.

Mr. Benjamin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. While I may agree with the Minister of Agriculture's remarks, that does not deny the fact that the threat has already been made against marketing boards. As there are now over 100 marketing boards, federal and provincial, in the country, boards which farmers worked for and desired for decades, can the minister explain how we are to reconcile Mr. Pepin's remarks with the statement on page 18 of the white paper which says that prices received by farmers and fishermen for their products are exempt from the guidelines?

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, all I know of Mr. Pepin's statements is what I read in the press. I will try to arrange a meeting with Mr. Pepin as soon as I can. I will hear what Mr. Pepin has to say, and I intend to meet with him as soon as possible. I am sure what the hon. member said, Mr. Speaker, is well recognized by many, namely, that marketing boards have a role to play in the pricing system, and that we support the concept of properly run marketing boards—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!