

Oral Questions

● (1450)

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—GOVERNMENT PLANS TO ASSURE LEVEL
SUGGESTED BY CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS NOT
REACHED

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, a question for the Prime Minister. The Canadian Labour Congress has indicated that the inflation rate this year will be some 12 per cent. I wonder if the Prime Minister can advise the House whether he will be attending the first ministers' conference with some contingency plan or ideas to show that this government is not bankrupt in order to see to it that this level of inflation is not reached?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wishes to recall, I did indicate that the second item on the agenda would be the state of the economy. Of course, the problem of inflation will be discussed. I hope it will be an occasion to show to an audience more open-minded than my usual one that the government has indeed done a great deal.

Mr. Alexander: A supplementary question. We are all waiting with bated breath to see the leadership given by the Prime Minister.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Alexander: Now, now, behave. Let me ask the Prime Minister this question. Does he agree with the statement made by the Canadian Labour Congress that inflation will reach 12 per cent this year?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I hope that the inflation rate will be below 12 per cent, but of course I am not a prophet.

An hon. Member: Oh, really?

Mr. Trudeau: I was going to say, if the hon. member would continue waiting with bated breath perhaps he will—

Mr. Sharp: Die.

An hon. Member: Suffocate.

Mr. Trudeau:—see that he should not wait too long.

UNEMPLOYMENT—GOVERNMENT PLANS TO ASSURE LEVEL
SUGGESTED BY CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS NOT
REACHED

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): The Prime Minister is still cheerful, but he has not answered my question. He has said nothing whatsoever. It has been further suggested by the Canadian Labour Congress that the unemployment rate will reach 8 per cent. Does the Prime Minister agree with that or, on the other hand, is he going to the first ministers' conference with some program in order to see to it that this rate is not reached?

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the unemployment figures for March will be published tomorrow. I do not know what they are.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: It is tomorrow or the next day, I am not sure, but I hope they will not be reaching that figure at all.

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HISTORIC SITES

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF ADMISSION FEE

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the concern expressed in various parts of Canada about the recently established scale of fees for admission to national historic sites, will the minister review this policy, and in particular will he take another look at the fee being charged for admission to Lower Fort Garry?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, we are looking at the situation of Lower Fort Garry and thinking of some sort of annual family type pass which might meet the need that is concerning the hon. member.

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NATIONAL PARKS

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF TOLLS ON RIDEAU
CANAL

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Would the minister reconsider the announcement made by his department in regard to tolls on the Rideau Canal which is going to cause severe hardship for the tourist industry, which is the prime source of revenue for that area of Leeds county in the summer?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to another hon. member a couple of days ago in regard to canals, the revenue which we will receive represents approximately 7 per cent of the operating costs. It seems to me it is difficult to justify lowering that figure.

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AGRICULTURE

CANADA-UNITED STATES QUOTAS ON BEEF CATTLE—
POSSIBILITY OF REMOVAL

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture following his recent visit during the Easter break to the United States where there was an exchange of goose eggs between him and his United States counterpart. May I ask the minister whether he was pressing for a removal of the import/export restrictions between the two countries, and what