

Oral Questions

ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—AVAILABILITY OF REGULATIONS TO PROVINCES—POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER MEETINGS WITH PROVINCES

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I am sure the minister will be disappointed to know that he has not satisfied me as to why there is all this delay. I should like to ask him whether the regulations have been made available to the provinces which are, of course, slightly concerned with this whole operation and have indicated they would not make any definite commitment with regard to the program until they have seen the regulations. Have the regulations been made available to the provinces and when?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would have concluded that the members of this House would have felt that the regulations made under a federal law should first be made available to the House and to parliament before they are made available outside.

An hon. Member: You are finally getting the point.

Mr. Stanfield: I wonder how many times the Minister of Finance will keep going around that barrel before he stops.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: He is keeping the information away from the public and using that as an excuse for keeping it away from the provinces. Some of us have some interest in seeing this program succeed despite all the bungling that is taking place.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: I should like to ask the minister whether he has made arrangements for the Ministers of Finance or whether the Prime Minister has made arrangements for the premiers—once the minister is gracious enough to make the regulations available to the provinces—to have a further meeting so that the people in Canada could know whether the provinces are in on this plan, whether they are part of this plan, and, if so, to what extent.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I am delighted to learn from the hon. gentleman that he is indeed in support of the program. We have had discussions at the official level about further meetings of officials on the regulations. Obviously, they will be made available to the provincial governments and we will be following up with them appropriate means of bringing to finality their participation in the program.

ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—CONSENSUS OF PROVINCES ON DURATION OF PROGRAM AND UNIFORMITY OF REGULATIONS

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, concerning discussions with provincial officials, can the minister advise the House specifically whether there has been a consensus or an agreement with the provinces in respect of, first, the duration of the program, and second, the uniformity of regulations across the country so that at least, if the federal people are unable to do so, the provinces will come up with some consistency and evenness in respect of the administration?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I should like to refer the hon. gentleman to previous responses in this regard. The different provinces have taken different viewpoints, so there is obviously no consensus upon this point. We hope that with the promulgation and publication of the regulations provincial governments will be able to make a final judgment as to what their position is. Obviously, our advocacy would be to have their full support for the program we have laid before the country and parliament, the kind of support that they promised at the premier's meeting in Saint John earlier this year.

Mr. Lawrence: Presumably the minister and the government have received no assurance that there will even be a uniformity of regulations across the country. Can the minister tell us whether he has obtained the assurance of at least a uniform level of participation by the provinces?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): The hon. gentleman is raising questions to which I have responded on a number of occasions referring to the different participation by, for example, Quebec and Ontario and the position taken by the government of Alberta. I think probably in the interest of saving time in the question period I should only refer the hon. gentleman to *Hansard* and the answers I have given.

● (1420)

ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—SUGGESTION THAT PROVISION FOR EQUALITY OF SEXES WITH REGARD TO INCOME BE MADE MANDATORY

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance with regard to the fact that women in Canada earn on the average 60 per cent of the amount earned by employed males. Last March, in response to a question on this matter, it was suggested by the Minister of Labour that largely this fell within provincial jurisdiction. Since the anti-inflation legislation now clearly involves the federal government with regard to wage and salary matters at all levels, will the government be insisting that the provision in the white paper for an exemption from the general guidelines to ensure the achievement of equality of the sexes with regard to income, be made mandatory instead of optional?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, within our jurisdiction we certainly would do so, and indeed, the other measures which are now before parliament with regard to equality of treatment within the work force will have this effect within the federal jurisdiction. We will, of course, advocate the same course of action to the provinces within their areas of jurisdiction.

Mr. Broadbent: With respect, and I do not say this critically, I think the minister missed part of the question. Considering that the white paper uses the word "may" with regard to the exemption for women, will the government either clarify or, if required, change its policy, and instead of making that an optional choice for exemption, make it mandatory so that women in Canada who do the same job as men will be paid at the same rate?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): That is the intention of Bill C-72, which is now before parliament, not just within the