

Oral Questions

make representations to the CTC the result of his agreeing with the Bell applications?

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier (Hochelaga): Mr. Speaker, since my answer was so brief, I realize the hon. member has not understood it. He asked me: Is the matter under consideration? I answered: yes. Then, he asked: Has the consideration of this matter been completed and what decision has been arrived at? To this last question the answer is no.

Mr. Lewis: I accept these answers, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

May I ask the minister whether he could, for the moment, cease being semantic and inform the House whether he is seriously considering making representations to the CTC on this important matter, or whether he is merely answering "yes", that he is considering, in order to have an answer to a question that may be uncomfortable?

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier (Hochelaga): I never give such answers, Mr. Speaker, because I never find a question uncomfortable; only answers can be so.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: I believe there are a few supplementaries that hon. members wish to ask the Minister of Finance relating to the first matter raised.

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FINANCE**INQUIRY AS TO DIFFERENT APPROACH TO MONETARY AND FISCAL POLICY IN LIGHT OF PORTER COMMISSION FINDINGS**

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'appelle-Moose Mountain): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister of Finance is this. In view of the negative findings of the Porter Royal Commission in connection with advice submitted to ministers of finance by the financial advisers of the government, and in view of the consistent record of the government since that royal commission report was made, may I ask whether it is the intention of the government to adopt a completely different approach to monetary and fiscal policy in line with that negative report? I am referring specifically to the theory of potential budgeting as opposed to the restrictive budgeting which has been followed during the last 25 years.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): The hon. gentleman and I could engage in a debate at some time about the theory of the Porter Commission and full employment budgeting.

TARGET FOR RATE OF INFLATION

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Minister of Finance. Bearing in mind the close relationship between United States and Canadian economic policies, and the announcement last week by the

[Mr. Lewis.]

United States government that they were going to aim at a 2½ per cent rate of inflation on a year to year basis in 1973, could the minister tell the House what rate of inflation is being aimed at in our policy making?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt that the question as asked by the hon. member is in order.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**EFFECT OF COURT JUDGMENT ON RIGHT OF PROVINCES TO LEGISLATE—REQUEST FOR REFERENCE TO SUPREME COURT OF CANADA**

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice arising from my earlier intervention under Standing Order 43. Will the minister consider the implications of a decision by an Ontario county court judge, which challenges the constitutionality of environment legislation in Ontario and, of course, will have effects in other provinces, and will he consider making an immediate reference to the Supreme Court of Canada in order that the matter may be settled and the public concern alleviated?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, it will certainly be my intention to consider the impact of this decision and to consult with my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, and with the provincial ministers. I also agree that if a vacuum were seen to exist in this extremely important field, such action as a reference might be desirable, although in the ordinary course the better practice would be to allow the case to proceed to the court of appeal. As I say, if a vacuum existed a different course of conduct might be required.

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FINANCE**MEETING OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTERS—INQUIRY AS TO OUTLINING OF FEDERAL CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR WAGE AND PRICE CONTROLS**

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Can he tell the House whether he will be outlining to the finance ministers' meeting later this week the contingency plan on wage and price controls that the Prime Minister referred to last Friday?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): No, Mr. Speaker.