

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, we have not formally concluded who the others will be. First, we want to consult fully with the people we first talked to as to the dimensions of this national forum. The hon. member is—

**Mr. Horner:** Will parliament do?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Yes, parliament is fine.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** I have already suggested to the labour critic for the opposition that if he wishes to take an opposition day to discuss the national forum or any of the other 14 points, I will be happy to be in the House and give what explanation I can. The opposition has not chosen to do so yet, but let me assure the hon. member there is no design to avert parliament. If I may continue, this matter is on the table for discussion with the interested groups. If we made a decision prior to full consultation I do not think it would help. I think it would be safe to assume that agricultural interests will be involved, and that no doubt will make the hon. member's seatmate very happy.

**Mr. Fraser:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I ask the minister whether he was setting forth government policy in his speech on October 28. May I also ask him this. If we had an opposition day, would he be able to tell us then what the other representatives might be?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member and the House should be aware that we are meeting with the business community tomorrow. Following that we hope to meet again with labour. There will be discussions with other groups which might be interested in participating in this body, so that depending on when the hon. member wishes to have his opposition day I might be able to be more specific.

**Mr. Fraser:** A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister advise the House whether he discussed the formulation of the national forum, as set out in his speech of October 28, before he made that speech; and before he made it the policy of the government was it discussed with the Canadian Labour Congress? Can the minister say whether the Canadian Labour Congress accepts the format the minister set out?

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, that is why it is difficult to indicate what other interests might be involved in this national forum. We are not sure at this stage whether the type of forum we are suggesting—an alliance of various interests on an equal footing to discuss national problems—would be suitable to the business community or to labour. The hon. member is fully aware that labour has indicated that they were desirous of having a tripartite body with a wide-sweeping delegation of powers.

**Mr. Fraser:** This is multipartite.

[Mr. Fraser.]

**Mr. Munro (Hamilton East):** If I might finish, there has been some division among labour on this. The Canadian Federation of Labour and others do not favour such a proposal. It is our hope that we can reconcile this question so that we can get on with the national forum and select appropriate representatives.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION****COST OF UNUSED BUILDING SPACE—SUGGESTED RETURN OF UNUSED SPACE TO PUBLIC WORKS**

**Mr. R. E. McKinley (Huron-Middlesex):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. In the report of the Secretariat of the Treasury Board dated last July, it is stated that the problem of rental costs on unused accommodation is receiving continuing attention by the Department of Public Works. How can the minister explain the fact that the Crown has paid \$4 million and an annual rent of \$241,000 for property for which it has no present use, as mentioned in the Auditor General's report which was tabled on Monday?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the Auditor General's report refers to a time frame that predates the item to which the hon. member is referring, and I think it is important to keep this fact in mind. Nonetheless, this is an ongoing review and the Minister of Public Works is in constant discussion and consultation on this and other matters with some of his colleagues and myself.

**Mr. McKinley:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General also noted that the present use of office space in many cases exceeds the existing guidelines for the provision and allocation of office space by more than 30 per cent. Since the Department of Public Works provides accommodation on the basis of an assumed growth factor, will the minister assure the House that if the expected growth is not realized, that surplus space will be returned to DPW for reallocation? Apparently at the present time there is no provision for that.

**Mr. Andras:** Mr. Speaker, those very matters, particularly in relation to our determination to keep the growth of the public service down next year to less than one percent, are receiving very serious consideration indeed. I have already indicated we are in regular discussion on them.

\* \* \*

**URBAN AFFAIRS****SACKVILLE, NOVA SCOTIA—ALLEGED CHANGE IN DEVELOPMENT PLAN BY NOVA SCOTIA HOUSING COMMISSION**

**Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants):** Mr. Speaker, I gave written notice of this question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Would the minister request Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to check with its counterpart in