

new home nor even think of paying current interest rates. I am wondering if the government is considering increasing the amount of funding to the RRAP government-sponsored program to enable people on fixed and low incomes to repair their present homes and bring them up to a certain standard, with the consequent conservation of energy.

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, a number of ideas and concepts are under study at the present time with respect to the provision of housing for Canadians. However, more detailed information must await the legislative program which will find its way to Parliament shortly. However, an inquiry will go forward with respect to the specific matter raised by the honourable senator.

Senator Marshall: A supplementary. I do not think it would require legislation. The program is now in effect. It is known as the RRAP program. It is simply a matter of putting more funds into it. This is vital and urgent.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

STATEMENT BY THE HON. ANDRÉ OUELLET

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have had the help of the whip on this side in finding the page in *Hansard* containing Mr. Ouellet's speech from which I quoted earlier. It is on page 56 of the House of Commons *Debates* of April 15, 1980, in the left-hand column. It is in the only full paragraph there.

If the Leader does not want to take note of it right away, would he indicate to whom I should give the information?

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his unfailing courtesy and consideration.

THE ECONOMY

INTEREST-FREE LOANS—PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question for the Minister of State for Economic Development. I put a question yesterday asking what the government had in mind with regard to controlling high interest rates and minimizing their effects. When I listened to him just a few moments ago, saying that he was an unrepentant pragmatist, it brought to mind the fact that he was at one time a member of the Social Credit Party. I can understand that pragmatism would have brought him into the Liberal Party, but I was wondering if the theory of social credit could not perhaps furnish a suggestion for the government's high interest rates. Has the minister thought of suggesting loans without interest to the government?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): Honourable senators, I think the Leader of the Opposition can rest assured that there have been from time to time certain modifications in the philosophy that he has referred to, and I think that fits well with my unrepentant pragmatism.

[Senator Marshall.]

The Minister of Finance has indicated that he will be working on a program in this respect, but as I said, I think, yesterday, or the day before, I hope senators opposite will not expect me to make announcements on behalf of other ministers. It will be an exercise in futility if they try to do that. The other ministers will run their departments, and I will try to do the best I can in mine.

● (1440)

Senator Flynn: I wanted to be sure the Minister of Finance would not forget the assistance that a former Social Crediter would be able to provide in this area.

Senator Olson: I take it the Leader of the Opposition is now endorsing some of those philosophies, and I welcome that.

Senator Flynn: You did not refer to Social Credit philosophy.

Hon. Robert Muir: I rise on a point of order. In view of the statement just made by the Minister of State for Economic Development—I think this is the second or third time he has said that he is not going to answer for this minister or that minister, and he is not going to make statements—I would ask him: To whom do we direct questions which do not pertain to economic development or any other subject?

If I remember correctly, during the last short session here, questions of every variety were posed by the present Minister of State for Economic Development to any one of the ministers in the Conservative government who sat on that side. I should like to know if the minister is going to sit there like Charlie McCarthy and not answer any questions other than those relating to his own particular little bailiwick.

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): I just want to say on behalf of the government that every effort will be made to co-operate with members of the opposition who wish to direct questions to this side. I gave a pledge yesterday that I would meet with the Leader of the Opposition and discuss with him the direction that questions might well take in the chamber, and that will be done.

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, may I speak to the point of order? I think the honourable senator wants to be fair. I did not say that I was going to answer in this chamber for ministers who are obviously in the other place. I will take notice of those questions, but let us be fair; I am not going to make announcements for and on behalf of other ministers.

Senator Muir: Further on the point of order, honourable senators, and just for clarification, I think the present minister should not be so adamant, and should not state his decision with such great authority. After all, he has only been in his present position for a short time, and he should not get carried away by a sense of his own importance.

As a little old coal miner from Cape Breton, all I want to know is to whom we direct these questions. Is the Minister of State for Economic Development going to respond constantly that it has nothing to do with him? Now he has clarified the situation by saying that we can ask him any question at all, and, if he has not got the answer with him, he will get it for us.