

Inquiries of the Ministry

A person who purchases the house as a personal residence for himself, where certain situations are not applicable that I will mention in a moment, will receive the \$500 payment without income tax consequences.

I should like to ask the Prime Minister on what basis this order was made. Is it a regulation, is it an order in council, or under what circumstances were these various provisions made that are set out at page 883 of *Hansard*?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not able at the moment to comment on the answer given by my hon. friend in reply to the question asked yesterday, but I will be glad to look into it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Possibly the Prime Minister could tell me—he should know this himself—whether any order in council was passed yesterday or the day before to this effect.

Mr. Pearson: I know of no order in council, Mr. Speaker, but I will be glad to look into it.

[Later:]

Mr. Diefenbaker: I should like to put a question to the Minister of Finance with regard to an answer he gave yesterday to my hon. friend from Digby-Annapolis-Kings. The question had to do with the \$500 bonus to be paid to the first purchaser of a new house. On what basis was that answer given? Does it rest on a regulation which has been passed, or on an order in council?

Mr. Gordon: When the Minister of Labour announced certain proposals for doing things to provide more jobs this coming winter he included among them a proposal to stimulate the construction of houses during the winter months. The essence of the proposal was that a bonus of \$500 should be granted to the first purchaser of any house which was substantially constructed during the winter period. That, obviously, was intended to reduce the construction costs of such a house. The minister of finance asked a question—I am sorry, I should have said “the former minister of finance”; I have been catching bad habits from my colleague the Secretary of State for External Affairs—the hon. member for Digby-Annapolis-Kings asked whether this bonus should be subject to income tax. I asked for time to look into this before replying directly, because I thought there might be some qualifications which should be included in any reply, as turned out to be the case.

Many of these points will be covered in the regulations issued and in the authority asked for in connection with this program, but as the question was a pertinent one and as it might have interfered with the program itself—and after all, the purpose of this program is to provide more jobs next winter

—I thought it was proper to give an answer to the hon. member yesterday.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, possibly now, after that circumlocution of the minister, he will answer my question. When he made this statement there was in fact no regulation or order in council?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, may I answer the right hon. gentleman by reminding him that when he brought in government policy with regard to assistance for designated areas some time ago the order in council to that effect was not passed for four months after he had made the announcement in the house.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I can understand the obvious annoyance of the Prime Minister, but I am asking the question of the Minister of Finance. Was there an order in council or a regulation at the time he gave this answer to the house?

Mr. Gordon: No, Mr. Speaker.

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George C. Nowlan (Digby-Annapolis-Kings): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister based on his rather angry interjection of a few minutes ago as the result of a question by the Leader of the Opposition, in which the Prime Minister referred to some order in council which had been passed at some time, the publication of which was delayed. I should like to ask the Prime Minister the subject matter of that order in council, the date of it and the identification of it, so that we can have the material before the house, in view of the insinuations which were contained in the interjection of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Pearson: If my hon. friend will put his good natured question on the order paper I will be glad to answer it.

APPLICATION OF BONUS TO HOUSES IN NORTH

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Labour. Can he inform the house whether the \$500 bonus for winter house construction applies to winter houses built by or for the Indians and Eskimos in the Canadian north?

REPRESENTATIONS RESPECTING IMPLEMENTATION OF BLADEN REPORT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): I should like to dare to ask the Minister of Finance a question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.