

Inquiries of the Ministry

opposition but also of the various sectors of the community. There will be a need for the government to introduce some very severe expenditure cuts which will hurt different vested interests in the country. We hope we will have the support of the opposition parties on that.

Mr. Baldwin: Why have you taken so long?

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the Prime Minister's statement yesterday about an adjournment of the house in the early summer, can he give the house an assurance that before parliament recesses legislation will be introduced to place some restraint on unjustifiable price increases, in order that the Canadian people may know that the government is seriously trying to stop this spiralling cost of living?

Mr. Trudeau: I doubt very much that any type of legislation has ever been suggested, including that from the N.D.P., but may I remind the house that we did introduce several cuts in very important areas across the country in the past months, and in each case the opposition parties have told us to re-establish these vast expenditures which we had to cut down.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. He stated in the house on September 13 that the government's attack on poverty could be centred on an attempt to control inflation. Can he tell the house with any assurance that he expects in the months ahead the government's attack on poverty in this regard to be a great deal more successful than it has been since last September?

Mr. Trudeau: I cannot venture to prophesy the effects of our future actions. I will just remind the house that had we heeded the opposition pleas and not proceeded with the cuts, inflation would have been a great deal worse.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hees: Does the Prime Minister not agree that what he just said is a further example of his many attempts to mislead the Canadian people on most of the important matters?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the further supplementary question is argumentative.

Mr. Hees: It is just a statement of fact.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for Témiscamingue wish to ask a supplementary question?

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question of the Prime Minister.

In view of the fact that he just said that new restrictions would have to be imposed in various sectors of the Canadian economy, is the Prime Minister considering the serious suggestions made in the house by the Ralliement créditiste?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I think that all those who know about such things agree that the suggestions coming from the créditiste system are, essentially, of an inflationary nature and inflation is precisely what we are trying to fight.

[English]

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether he does not think it is possible to overdo restraint, as appears to have been done now for some time by his associate, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Again I think that this supplementary question is argumentative.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether, keeping in mind financial priorities and keeping in mind the increasing cost of living, he has any ideas or policies to assist senior citizens who cannot live on their meagre pensions?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the hon. member is asking now for a general statement of policy. If the question were allowed we would be getting into a debate which, as I suggested a moment ago, should not be allowed.

Mr. Hees: This is simply not included in the just society.

TRADE

WHEAT—DISCUSSION WITH MAINLAND CHINA RESPECTING SALES

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, whom we welcome back from his extensive pilgrimage.