

Oral Questions

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think it is too early for the government or the House of Commons to draw conclusions about how the post-inflation period will be dealt with in terms of institutions. As the hon. House leader just indicated, we are examining different propositions, now, with the provinces and, indeed, in meetings we are having with business and labour groups. From the hon. member's point of view and from our own, it would be preferable to wait until, in effect, we make an announcement or introduce legislation.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You do not want any input.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. Does he not feel it is also preferable at least to familiarize members of this House, through a white paper, with what the government is proposing to various provincial jurisdictions and labour unions in this country with respect to the so-called post-control period which the Prime Minister has in mind? We must bear in mind that one of the provisions of the proposed Inflation Monitoring Agency Act provides for the agency to have the power, with the approval of the minister, to communicate or allow to be communicated to any person any privileged information filed under the act.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting a white paper. Let me remind him that we published two such papers on the post-inflation period. One of them was entitled "The Way Ahead"—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paproski: You are "away behind".

Mr. Trudeau: The other paper was entitled "Agenda for Co-operation". It is well known to the opposition, and has been for some time, that there would be a post-inflation period—a post-control period.

Some hon. Members: Oh, ho!

Mr. Trudeau: A post-Anti-Inflation Board period. Hon. members opposite have been arguing for the better part of a year that we should get out from under the Anti-Inflation Board and be in an anti-inflation period—a post-Anti-Inflation Board period.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: The opposition has known this. We have made our intentions clear; we have sketched out the kinds of institutions we see in existence then. As I have said, we have been consulting with the provinces and other sectors of the economy. We are still waiting to receive any constructive proposition from the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[Mr. Stevens.]

C. D. HOWE RESEARCH INSTITUTE—IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the warning by the C. D. Howe Research Institute that lack of action on their recommendations, which call for generous tax reductions for retraining workers in declining industries, extended unemployment insurance benefits for the long-term unemployed, greater use of differential fiscal policies for regional development, and a significant reduction in sales tax, would mean unnecessary delay and would cause serious exacerbation and concern with respect to the growth of unemployment in the economy, will the Prime Minister indicate to the House what action he intends to take on the very serious recommendations of this respected research institute?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the government has already acted on some of the recommendations. As a matter of fact, the recommendations are echoing some of the policies the government has already announced and is following. I am sure that even the hon. member would not want to stand and say his party would advocate applying all those recommendations. With regard to recommendations by various institutes across the country, obviously you accept some and you do not accept others. I am sure this is the position of the hon. member's party.

REQUEST BUDGET BE INTRODUCED TO IMPROVE ECONOMY

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, in view of the failure of the government, despite repeated demands from the opposition and others in the country, to bring in a budget right now which would provide for the necessary tax credits and incentives to encourage the private sector to expand, will the Prime Minister indicate to the House, if he cannot screw up his courage to call a general election, whether we can expect a new budget?

Mr. Basford: We want to build a pipeline before we have an election.

Right Hon. P. E. (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is now calling for tax cuts. Let me remind him that when we proposed tax cuts in past months the opposition took some 20 days to make up its mind on whether they would vote for them or not.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Dick: It took you 11 months to bring in the bill.

Mr. Trudeau: I warn you, Mr. Speaker, that it is going to become fashionable for opposition members to stand up, beat their chests and say, "We want an election".

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Guess why?