

FINANCE

NEED FOR ECONOMIC STIMULATION IN VALUE OF ALLEGED WEAK DOMESTIC DEMAND—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo-Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Finance arises out of the recent release concerning first quarter gross national product information by Statistics Canada. On May 26, the day after the presentation of the budget, the leader of my party, the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Saltsman:—asked the Minister of Finance why he had not brought in a budget which would stimulate the economy and reduce unemployment. The reply of the minister was that final domestic demand in Canada is and has remained at a very strong level for the past 12 to 18 months; therefore the further stimulus of consumer demand in Canada will not take up the slack in current production.

In light of statistics released since the introduction of the budget by Statistics Canada and in light of their conclusion that the first quarter was characterized by very weak personal expenditure on goods, can the minister say whether he is now prepared to revise his arguments made at the time of the budget, namely, that we are in no need of more economic stimulation than was shown in his budget?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I point out to the hon. gentleman that the first quarter figures of 2.7 per cent indicate an annual rate of about 11 per cent, most of which was concentrated in the domestic sector of Canada. I think if he will read the release again, he will see that both the government sector and private spending have contributed substantially to the situation in Canada; but, as I observed in the budget speech, the export side has been the weaker.

Mr. Saltsman: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since most of the increase has occurred in inventory build-up, which means that there is a danger, once inventories are built up and consumer demand remains low, of our heading for a recession, is the minister prepared to revise his estimates on the need for stimulus in the economy and bring in additional stimulus, by cutting taxes for those at the lower end of the income scale?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the inventory build-up is founded on the assumption of business that consumer demand will be high and that it will be necessary to have extra inventory.

Mr. Broadbent: That's absurd.

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN STANDING ORDERS TO PREVENT FALL OF GOVERNMENT EXCEPT ON VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the President of the Privy

Oral questions

Council. Could the minister tell the House if during the summer recess he intends to proceed with an amendment to the parliamentary procedure to be presented when we will resume work next fall and which would enable us to change the standing orders, something like this:

That the House cannot bring down the government otherwise than by a non confidence vote, which would make it possible, each time we have a free vote as we did this morning, to show to the people of Canada that this House is an example of living democracy?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon subcommittees of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization are submitting reports which will propose very substantial amendments to the rules of the House. I hope those reports will commend themselves to the House: but when the committee itself reports we have no intention, on our side, of making changes of the kind proposed by the hon. member. I think our rules with regard to confidence motions are well established and traditional, and we should continue to adhere to them.

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AIR TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS INTO AVIATION SAFETY CONDUCTED PRIOR TO JULY, 1974

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport with a view to eliciting as much factual information as is available with reference to the Canadian Airlines Pilots Association and CATCA? Would the minister make available to the House and country the aviation safety investigations conducted by the Ministry of Transport prior to the issuance of NOTAM 1274, in July, 1974, since I believe the minister specifically referred to this document, or to this study, in an address delivered on March 2, this year, at Ottawa, to the special international air safety symposium. Will the minister make this information available to the House and country?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I gathered from the beginning of the question that the hon. member was referring to investigations relating to incidents in the air. I will be glad to look at the relevant practices and procedures. I have no reason to think that the basic information should not be available; however, I will look into it.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

POSITION OF UNITED STATES NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE ON EFFECT OF AEROSOL SPRAYS ON OZONE—SUGGESTION MINISTER CORRECT HIS ANSWERS

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday the minister, replying to my question, advised the House that the U.S. National Academy of Science concluded that there