

Inquiries of the Ministry

Automotive Agreement, this uncertainty having arisen because of the repeated refusal of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce to give the House the necessary assurances, and because of the Prime Minister's reference yesterday to the possibility of the safeguards being negotiable, and because of yesterday's recommendation by a presidential commission that the American government continue to press for the removal of the safeguards, this House resolves that such safeguards be maintained.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members have heard the motion proposed by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 43, the motion cannot be put without the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimous consent, therefore the motion cannot be put.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

INCOME TAX

AMENDMENT OF BILL TO PROVIDE SAME STANDARD OF FAMILY NEED AS IN PROPOSED FAMILY INCOME SECURITY PLAN

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the FISP bill introduced by the Minister of National Health and Welfare yesterday uses a substantially different standard of family need in relation to allowances for dependent children than does the tax reform bill introduced by the Minister of Finance, is the government proposing to introduce amendments to the tax legislation in order that the standard in respect of family needs in the two bills will be consistent?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

FAMILY INCOME SECURITY

PUBLICATION OF GOVERNMENT PLAN TO FIGHT POVERTY TO FACILITATE CONSIDERATION OF BILL—QUEBEC PROPOSAL CONCERNING PAYMENT LEVELS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): In the statement released yesterday by the Minister of National Health and Welfare reference was made to the FISP bill as part of the fight against poverty. Will the Prime Minister tell the House when such a co-ordinated government plan to fight poverty will be made public in order to facilitate rational consideration of the bill introduced by the minister yesterday?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the over-all approach was spelled out by the minister

[Mr. Broadbent.]

almost a year ago in his white paper, and the details of it are coming out as evidenced now in the FISP legislation and earlier in the increase in the guaranteed income supplement.

Mr. Stanfield: I was wondering whether that was what the minister had in mind. In view of the proposal the Prime Minister is reported to have received from the Prime Minister of Quebec to the effect that subject to conforming to certain national standards the provinces should be allowed to determine the levels of family allowance to be paid by the government of Canada within the respective provinces, is the government considering this proposal and does it intend to confer with all the provinces on this matter before we proceed with second reading of the FISP bill?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the House will recall that when the Minister of National Health and Welfare was preparing the FISP bill he had discussions with all the provinces during a long period last winter and spring. Indeed, our proposals at the Victoria conference followed very shortly a meeting by the minister with his opposite numbers in the provinces and indicated that the federal government was prepared to spend an extra \$150 million in an attempt to meet some of the improvements suggested by the various provinces. We feel we have done a great deal to meet provincial suggestions.

This letter from the premier of Quebec arrived a little more than a week ago and contains an interesting proposal, but it was not received in time for us to readjust our bill, examine the proposal in detail or consult, as the hon. member suggests, with other provinces which might be interested. For the time being, all I can say is we are glad Premier Bourassa is in this case at least spelling out in a little more detail what kind of co-operation he thinks is needed to perhaps obtain a constitutional agreement. So we are prepared to discuss this administrative arrangement with him, and until that has been done I cannot report to the House concerning whether or not we will accept it or whether or not we will discuss it with other provinces. It is an interesting proposal and we are looking at it.

[Translation]

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister.

Is the government considering the possibility of making the necessary amendments to meet the requirements of the Quebec government?

Mr. Trudeau: I think, Mr. Speaker, that I tried to answer that question when it was asked by the Leader of the Opposition, but I can repeat to the hon. member that the Quebec premier, when rejecting the Victoria agreement, had stated that he was doing so because he would like to elucidate the interpretation of the clauses under consideration concerning the constitution and social security. If his proposal is an indication that he would like to elucidate those clauses, we would be quite pleased and I repeat that we would be ready to discuss with him the possibility of amending our legislation in order to attain the proposed goals.