

Oral Questions

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): I hope the hon. gentleman will look through the background material and get a wider perspective of that speech.

Mr. Paproski: Having regard to the vagueness both of that answer and of the statement in the budget address, may I ask whether the minister is aware that the pamphlet "Budget in Brief" makes the bold statement: "Tax cuts will reduce prices." If so, would he tell the House just which we are to believe—his words in this chamber, or his pamphlets?

The pamphlet also says that the reduction in the sales tax "represents an average saving of about \$650 per house". Speaking in this chamber, the minister said only that it would "contribute to moderation of prices". Does the statement in the pamphlet represent the government's position, and, if so, will the hon. gentleman tell us what means he intends to use to keep that promise?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, the pamphlet "Budget in Brief" and the budget address are readily reconcilable. I hope that when we get to the committee stage the hon. member will be here to put that argument again and I can attempt to reply in the detail that it deserves.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paproski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—maybe a question of privilege. I find there are misleading statements in the pamphlet "Budget in Brief". I have found two fairly serious inconsistencies. First, on page eight, the pamphlet states:

It is estimated that at current rates about \$1,100 in sales tax is paid on the building materials that go into an average home. The reduction of the tax therefore represents an average saving of about \$650 per house.

In his budget address, the minister simply stated:

I am confident that this measure will add stimulus to the industry and will, at the same time, contribute to a moderation of prices for housing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: On page three of the pamphlet it is stated:

Tax cuts will reduce prices and costs directly or indirectly and increase the take-home pay of Canadians.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: Just to show the minister I have read what he has said, let me point out that in the budget address he simply stated:

I believe the tax cuts can help to reduce prices and costs directly or indirectly, and thus slow down the upward movement of inflation.

Why isn't the minister honest with the House and the Canadian people?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member has raised a point of order. The fact of the matter is that detailed questions about the budget could have been asked during the budget debate. Moreover, detailed submissions about the legislation to be proposed when those measures are before the committee of the whole—there is a series of budget bills to be considered. The questions put to the minister by the hon. member are related to the subject matter of those bills, yet they might have been acceptable because, at the

[Mr. Paproski.]

same time, they were connected with the speech made in the House by the Minister of Finance. In any case, I cannot find that the hon. member has a legitimate point of order.

SALES TAX ON AUTOMOBILES—APPLICABLE TO DATE OF ORDER OR DATE OF DELIVERY

Mr. Robert McKinley (Huron-Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, my question is further to the question asked by the hon. member for Edmonton West regarding the sales tax on trucks which might be on dealers' lots at the present time. Would the hon. gentleman give the House some information on this question and can he also tell us whether or not the new tax on automobiles that he is proposing will apply to new cars which were ordered but not yet delivered or whether it will apply as from delivery dates?

● (1450)

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as I put it to the hon. member's colleague, the hon. member for Edmonton West, I will try to deal with these points in reviewing the application of the sales tax on trucks as it affects inventory. As to the application of the additional surtax on high energy consuming vehicles, I will give the hon. gentleman more detail. We can go into the question in some amplitude when we get the bill before the House.

Mr. McKinley: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. This is a very urgent matter. Dealers are selling cars and trucks every day and they would like to know the answer within a day or two.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I will give the hon. gentleman some details of a more precise nature, but I always hesitate to give a precise interpretation of a Ways and Means motion just off the top of my head.

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DRUGS

ALLEGED LACK OF TESTING OF NEW PRODUCTS—
SUGGESTED USE OF ALL TESTING FACILITIES

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Why does the drug directorate of the health protection branch, or any other federal health agency, not test all new drugs coming on to the market?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, there is a very good reason. If the directorate itself were to test, in the sense that the hon. member must mean, every single drug that comes on to the market, we would require a lab much larger than any lab presently existing in the country. It has always been our policy to require very elaborate and thorough investigation and testing of drugs on the part of private applicants, and these tests are then checked and verified by scientists of the health protection branch before permission to market is granted. This practice in this area is followed in most other countries.