

thing I have not been able to achieve, but it might be well worth raising the matter again this Thursday and Friday.

Mr. Stanfield: Does the minister propose to go beyond the current year in terms of information and has he taken any steps yet or does he propose to take any steps at the upcoming meeting to establish an information centre, let alone a co-ordination centre, with regard to a longer phase period such as four or five years involving large upcoming capital projects?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, a rather thorough analysis is now being conducted within the Department of Finance and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources as to capital requirements, particularly for energy resources, during the next decade and thereafter. I am not sure whether at this stage I would want to bring that into its co-ordinated phase with the provinces.

MEETING OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FINANCE
MINISTERS—DISCUSSION OF MEANS TO RELIEVE TAX
BURDEN ON RURAL RESIDENTS

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. Will the minister be seeking jointly with the provincial ministers of finance means of relieving the tax burden on rural people? I ask this in light of the fact that the number of people employed in agriculture dropped by 31,000 in the recent 12-month period.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that is certainly a relevant consideration. I would think the terms of reference of the meeting are wide enough for that to be brought up.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for York South on a supplementary.

Mr. Lewis: No, Mr. Speaker. My question is not supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps we might have a few supplementaries and then recognize the hon. member for York South.

MEETING OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FINANCE
MINISTERS—INQUIRY AS TO PROPOSALS RESPECTING
ESTATE AND CAPITAL GAINS TAXES

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Minister of Finance. Can the minister indicate whether he will be making any specific proposals at the impending federal provincial conference with regard to estate tax and capital gains taxes on farm lands and small businesses in order to promote some equity and consistency in these important matters?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can be as specific as the hon. member would like.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

MEETING OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTERS—
POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF PERSONAL INCOME TAX IN
RESPONSE TO QUEBEC REPRESENTATIONS

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance.

In the course of this federal provincial conference, does he intend to give a precise answer to the request that the Premier of Quebec has made to the federal government to set up a coordinated program of tax reductions so as to avoid an increase in personal income tax and in borrowing from external sources?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, of course I shall answer the letters from the Quebec Premier and the proposals from Quebec Finance Minister Raymond Garneau. Their argument is almost the same as that put forward by representatives of the Ontario government on the whole question of distribution of taxation sources. At any rate, this item will be formally put on the agenda.

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put another supplementary to the Minister of Finance.

Does he feel that there should not be any increase in personal income tax this year?

* * *

[English]

COMMUNICATIONS

BELL CANADA RATE INCREASE APPLICATION—INQUIRY
AS TO OPPOSITION BY GOVERNMENT

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications. Last Friday my colleague, the hon. member for Toronto-Lakeshore, inquired of him whether the federal government was going to join the Ontario and Quebec governments in opposing the applications of Bell Canada for further increases in their rates. In view of the hon. member's question, may I ask the minister whether he has done so, and whether the federal government is now prepared to make representations to the Canadian Transport Commission against the Bell application for increases?

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first part of the question is yes and to the second part, no.

[English]

Mr. Lewis: I have a very short supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

—yes and no in the same answer, that is good.

[English]

May I ask the minister to tell the House whether the government has considered the matter of these gouging increases sought by Bell Canada, and is his decision not to