

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South):** Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that members of the government in our system are collectively responsible for government policy and direction, is it the Prime Minister's view of democracy and our parliamentary system that Members of the government are entitled to act differently than members of Parliament and say things to some people in their private capacity, and different things to some people in their ministerial capacity? How do we differentiate between a member of the government and a member of Parliament, in his government?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, obviously in their statements of policy any minister has to respect the policy of the government. However, the ministers mentioned by the hon. member are involved in consultation. We believe in consultation, and I encourage my ministers to continue with it.

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• (1430)

[Translation]

## THE ECONOMY

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT RECOMMENDATIONS  
MADE BY QUEBEC MEMBERS

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Madam Speaker, to continue in the same vein, I also wish to direct my question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. I imagine he is well aware that the same, or more or less the same, group of ten which signed a letter that was thrown out by decision of the Prime Minister, that the same group which includes two ministers who are receiving representations from Quebec organizations and private citizens to the effect that the present policy followed by the Minister of Finance is unacceptable. In the circumstances, to confer some credibility on this group, could the Prime Minister give Quebecers the assurance that he is willing not only to receive but also to implement recommendations the group may make if it ever has the courage to make these recommendations publicly?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, I am really surprised at this kind of question. The ministers are involved in a consultation process, which is nothing new, and these two ministers are certainly not the first to do so. Since I became Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, myself and other ministers have been accustomed to consulting the people and to receiving briefs and representations from individuals, which are then passed on to the government through caucus or directly discussed in cabinet. This is continuing, and although the party opposite may claim to receive its knowledge from a divine source, we do not. We prefer to consult the people, and we will continue to do so.

## Oral Questions

INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT WILL SUPPORT  
RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THREE UNION LEADERS

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Madam Speaker, the Canadian people know perfectly well how the recommendation for stimulating the housing sector that was made by two ministers and ten Members of Parliament was received. In view of that experience, the people of Quebec have every reason to be concerned about the value of the exercise. I merely wish to ask the Prime Minister, to give Quebecers some comfort—lest they think this is another smokescreen like the previous exercise—whether or not he is willing, at least out of respect for Quebecers and the group of ten, to give them the assurance that he will consider the proposals resulting from this exercise and will also implement the recommendations made by three union leaders and endorsed by the head of the Liberal caucus?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, when we consult the people, and political suggestions are made, either by union leaders or the general public, it is the duty of Members of Parliament to make such representations known in caucus. In cabinet, ministers have a duty to indicate they have received certain representations and to discuss these. I can assure the hon. member and the public that this is done, and what the opposition criticized in the action taken by the ten a few months ago was that they made such representations publicly in a letter addressed to the government. So—

**Mr. La Salle:** You were criticized for not meeting a basic need, although this was requested by your own members. The answer should not be that difficult.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

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[English]

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Right Hon. Prime Minister. The question I would like to put to him is an informational one. This morning Dr. Stuart Smith, chairman of the Science Council of Canada, released a rather striking report called "Planning Now For an Information Society. Tomorrow is too Late". In this report Dr. Smith states that we are falling far behind in the modern technologies, and many sectors of our manufacturing industries soon will become obsolete if we do not move and plan. By 1985 in computers alone we will have a trade deficit of billions of dollars.

In light of this report, can the Prime Minister tell the House what the government is planning in order to meet these new technologies? What kind of development does the Prime Minister envisage for the future? Are we going to rely on