

other fields. We were prepared to modify our legislation to take into account provincial priorities whenever possible.

Mr. Speaker: I remind hon. members that only a few minutes are left before the end of the question period. The hon. member for Lotbinière may ask a supplementary question and I will raise the next subject immediately afterward.

Mr. Fortin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the right hon. Prime Minister, in replying to these questions, is using the past tense, would this mean that he is keeping the same strategy in connection with these relations or this policy or should we understand that the federal government does not intend to raise this subject during the next federal-provincial discussions?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I think that once more the hon. member misunderstood my reply. I repeat that if he would refer to the letter I sent at the beginning of March to the Quebec premier, he would find that on the contrary the federal government is prepared to make those adjustments in the field of family allowances but also to discuss the adjustments in other areas connected with social legislation.

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[English]

ELECTIONS

BILL RESPECTING ELECTION EXPENSES—INQUIRY AS TO DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question regarding the bill introduced today by the President of the Privy Council at the request of the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister indicate whether he has had consultations which would enable him to tell the House the length of time it would take after the bill is passed before it would become operative?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe I indicated in answer to a question of that nature—I am not sure if it was in the House or outside the House—that we think it is such a good bill and so close to the recommendations of the Barbeau committee on which eminent Conservatives and NDP members sat and so close to the recommendations of the special committee of the House, that it might be passed with unanimous consent perhaps as soon as the opposition has taken knowledge of the bill. Perhaps it could be done tomorrow by unanimous consent.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister misunderstood the question. Irrespective of the merits of the bill, and we will decide that after we have had a look at it, can he indicate whether he has had discussions and consultations with officials which could lead him to tell the House how long the bill would take to become operative after it is given Royal Assent?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have not had direct discussion with the electoral officers on this matter but I am informed that the electoral law as it now reads makes it difficult for a bill to be applicable unless a period of six

Inquiries of the Ministry

months is given to the electoral officer after the passage of such a bill modifying the electoral act. Of course, the House is always in a position, if it wishes, to amend that previous act and to decide unanimously that they want it to go into operation the day after tomorrow.

Mr. Baldwin: Bring it in and see what we do.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are running short of time. I suggest, respectfully, to the hon. member that perhaps we might return to this subject tomorrow. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP—REQUEST FOR DELAY OF APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFER OF TUGBOATS FROM CANADIAN REGISTRY

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport which relates to the retention under Canadian registry, if at all possible, of tugboat operations. Would the minister give consideration to deferring applications for transfer out of Canadian registry of tugboat operations on the east coast and the St. Lawrence River until such time as the operative sections of his colleague's bill with respect to foreign takeovers are capable of being brought into play in this situation?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to take that suggestion under advisement. I am not sure what the legal limitations are but I shall be glad to look at them.

FOREIGN OWNERSHIP BILL—INQUIRY AS TO DEBATE

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister who some time ago attached great importance to the foreign ownership bill becoming law as rapidly as possible. I should like to ask him when this bill is going to commence its progress through the House?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, surely this is a matter for discussion between the House leaders. I think all parties have agreed that this week we should proceed as quickly as possible with the bill to increase the guaranteed income supplement and the veterans' pensions bill. As soon thereafter as the parties can agree on any other bill that they want to pass by unanimous consent or quasi-immediate action, we would be prepared to give these bills very high priority.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has recognized the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. If