

heard, also, the explanations I gave—which I repeat now—that this circular was meant to help charitable organizations by indicating to them what the courts had decided on the basis of the law. I repeat what I said yesterday, that if the charitable organizations do not want to be guided by this circular, they do not have to be.

It is put out as a service to them, not as a statement of the law or even as guidance under the law. It is put out as a service to those charitable organizations which asked the previous minister of national revenue if he would issue such guidance for their information. If they do not want to be guided by it, they do not have to be. I repeat my statement of yesterday, that in the last resort it is the courts which will decide what the law says.

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Prime Minister what action he has taken to put his suspension order into effect, because the Prime Minister knows that it is not enough just to say it is suspended and something will vanish. If that were the case, he could have said the same thing long ago, no doubt, about unemployment and inflation. Because of the concern and the confusion that his comments of yesterday have created, what actual steps have been taken to put this order into effect? Has he at least been in touch with the Minister of National Revenue, who is out of reach of this chamber, to instruct him to put his order suspending this circular into effect?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Following yesterday's debate, I did ensure that the Department of National Revenue would be informed of the debate in the House and they would take whatever action is necessary. I said in the House yesterday that if it were in my power to suspend the document, I would suspend it. I went on to say that suspending such a document only has meaning for those who do not want to ask for help from the department in guiding them on whether or not they are charitable organizations.

The House must understand that many charitable organizations do things through inadvertence which are interpreted as political activity and which might disqualify them from exemptions. I understand that these organizations go to the department and ask for guidance. When they are told that certain actions have been judged under the law as disqualifying them as charitable organizations, they cease those activities and then are able to qualify; they are not penalized. Once again, the Department of National Revenue's duty is to help citizens to understand the law, and this is exactly what the circular is meant for. If some citizens do not consider it helpful, they can consider it suspended.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

FINANCE

REQUEST FOR DEBATE ON BANK ACT

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): What the Prime Minister is saying, sir, is that the new document which was suspended yesterday is in effect today. In other words, he is being as consistent in this matter as he was in the question of controls when he betrayed the Canadian people in the 1974 election campaign.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: My question, sir, is for the Minister of Finance—

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Trudeau: First, the Leader of the Opposition forces his lady member to sit down; then he addresses a question to me; then he addresses one to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An hon. Member: Go and see the Governor General.

Mr. Speaker: I recognized the Leader of the Opposition and I will let him pursue his question; but it stretches the point to put a preamble to one minister and a question to another.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Finance—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: I will wait until there is quiet in the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: My question to the Minister of Finance, if I can get some order on that side of the House—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: You are not in church, Joe.

Mr. Clark: —relates to economic policy and to the opportunity of the House of Commons to consider some economic measures. I wonder if the Minister of Finance can tell the House when he intends to introduce to the House for debate the Bank Act which this government has been deliberately delaying in the hope of avoiding revealing its intentions before an election campaign, and when might we expect to have before the House the necessary amendments to the Income Tax Act arising from the budget?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, last week I gave the answer that we were waiting for the French translation of the bill. The bill is now in front of the cabinet. I hope that within a matter of weeks—