

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I apologize, Mr. Speaker, but—

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the minister would like to return to motions.

Mr. Stanfield: No, he would not.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

PROSPECTIVE INCREASE IN COST OF WINTER
CLOTHING—REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF FEDERAL SALES
TAX

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Prime Minister. In view of persistent reports that winter clothing will cost 20 per cent to 50 per cent more this fall, will the Prime Minister immediately recommend to parliament the removal of the 12 per cent federal sales tax on clothing for adults?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for the suggestion.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Trinity on a supplementary and then call orders of the day.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that a 12 per cent reduction at the wholesale level represents an approximate reduction of 20 per cent in prices at the retail level, would the Prime Minister not agree that this is one of the most important measures this government could recommend to parliament—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Trudeau: You are out of order.

Mr. Hellyer: —to give lower and middle income groups—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Hellyer: —a chance to protect themselves against the winter cold?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the hon. member kindly resume his seat. He knows that a question asked in those terms is irregular.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege now that we have come to the end of the question period. I did not want to impinge upon that. It involves the Minister of Manpower and Immigration and is similar to the question of privilege raised earlier in the session concerning the Secretary of State and his circulation of correspondence leaving the impression that he had the concurrence of all members of parliament. The minister is responsible for the appearance of certain newspaper

[*Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).*]

advertisements throughout the country leaving the positive impression that all members of parliament are involved in some kind of organization which he wishes to set up in communities under the Local Initiatives Program.

It is not a question of wanting to avoid responsibility but rather a question of the right of members to reject the minister's offer of inclusion in this scheme. All members of the House have not agreed nor have they answered the correspondence that has been circulated by the minister. It is therefore not within the minister's right, by virtue of his office or any other reason, to leave the impression in national newspaper advertisements that all members are involved in this scheme. I personally want no part of the approval of a grant for the making of wooden ducks by a motorcycle gang in Montreal or grants to count tombstones or seagulls.

My question of privilege, put succinctly, is that the minister, not having agreed to remove that advertisement, should rise now and say that he will have it redesigned so as to remove the impression that he has the co-operation of all hon. members in this scheme of his. That is my right and I insist upon it. I wish the minister would give his assurance that he will do that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I will have another advertisement prepared suggesting that, but I will certainly note that I do not have the co-operation of the hon. member.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

**STATUTE LAW (SUPPLEMENTARY RETIREMENT
BENEFITS) AMENDMENT ACT, 1973**

PROVISION FOR REMOVAL OF TWO PER CENT LIMIT ON
ESCALATION, REDUCTION OF ELIGIBLE AGE

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board) moved that Bill C-220, to amend the statute law providing for the payment of supplementary retirement benefits to certain persons in receipt of pensions payable out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words to explain the details of the bill to amend the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act. The principal reason for introducing this bill is to provide that increases in the consumer price index will be fully reflected in the escalation of benefits payable under this act. As hon. members will recall, I have stated in the House on a number of occasions that the government's objective was to remove the 2 per cent ceiling on the annual increase of pensions payable under this act, but I had suggested that this should be