

Inquiries of the Ministry

ESTABLISHMENT OF PRICE AND WAGE GUIDELINES TO CONTROL INFLATION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the question asked by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley. Is the government now giving consideration to the establishment of price and wage guidelines with effective penalties to prevent non-compliance in order to try to control inflation which increased during the first eight months of the year at an annual rate of 6 per cent? If so, when does the government intend to announce such guidelines?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not agree, as usual, with the figures quoted by the hon. member, but if he will look back he will see that we have been answering to the House for some time that we were considering this. As to an announcement, of course we would only announce it after the government had made up its mind.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister will check with Statistics Canada he will find that my figures are correct.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the hon. member have a supplementary?

Mr. Hees: Yes. In view of the very serious and rapidly rising inflation, how long does the government intend to persist in its business as usual or do nothing attitude?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That of course is debate. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate on a supplementary and then the hon. member for Greenwood on a different subject, returning eventually to this subject after a number of other questions are asked.

GOVERNMENT POSITION RESPECTING UNEMPLOYED UNDER AGE 25—REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON BUILDING MATERIALS TO STIMULATE HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. In view of persistent statements on Thursday and again today that the government considers it has not lost the fight to create jobs because there are not as many unemployed in the age group above 25, has the government taken the conscious position that unemployed people who are under age 25 are not as important as those above age 25, and will we see in the government's program any policy which reflects this kind of thinking?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first part of the question is no. In respect of the second part, the hon. member will see any announcements if and when and they are made.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. I wonder whether the Minister of Finance could indicate to the House whether he has received representations from Harold G. Shipp, president of the Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada, suggesting that there will be a very substantial increase in the cost of housing in the last quarter of 1971 and asking whether the minister will accept the positive suggestion that the 11 per

[Mr. Speaker.]

cent sales tax on building materials and other related taxation on housing be reassessed in order to try to stimulate growth in this particular area?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, from the forecasts I have seen this is going to be the best housing year in Canada's history with housing starts over 225,000.

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COMMUNICATIONS

CLOSING OF TORONTO "TELEGRAM"—SUGGESTED MEETING OF PRIME MINISTER, ONTARIO PREMIER AND PUBLISHER ON PLAN TO MAINTAIN OPERATION

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In view of the economic dislocation which will result from the shutdown of the operations of the *Toronto Telegram* and in view of the public interest in maintaining a competitive press in the metropolitan areas of Canada, will the Prime Minister get in touch with the Prime Minister of Ontario and the publisher of the *Toronto Telegram* with a view to seeing whether some plan can be worked out for the continued operation of the newspaper?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, of course the shutdown of the *Telegram* is of concern to those who are interested in seeing the pursuance of the policy of a free and vigorous press in this country, but I do not believe the suggestion of the hon. member is one I could take up because I understand the publisher himself has said he does not want any form of government intervention.

Mr. Brewin: If that suggestion would not work, would the Prime Minister, in light of the expressed willingness of the employees of the *Toronto Telegram* to invest in the continued operation of this paper, suggest to the publisher that he should defer shutting down the operation until an effort is made to continue the operation by a co-operative including employees and readers of the newspaper?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, that is a different line of questioning. If it were necessary for me to serve as a go-between between the workers and their employer and if they have that confidence in me, I do not see any impossibility in following the suggestion, but I have had no request from the workers to put their point of view to the employer and it seems to me they are perfectly able to do that themselves.

CLOSING OF TORONTO "TELEGRAM"—INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED BREACH OF COMBINES ACT

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Are the minister or his officials in receipt of a telegram from Robert Pryor, chairman of the Council of Toronto Newspaper Unions, with regard to the sale of the *Toronto Telegram* assets constituting a breach of the restrictive trade practices provisions of the Combines Inves-