

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath):

That the government investigate these bank practices, demand an accountability of loans under government guarantee, and report to the House at the earliest opportunity.

**Mr. Speaker:** The House has heard the motion proposed by the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe. Under the terms of the Standing Order this motion requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is not. The motion cannot be put.

• (11:10 a.m.)

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

## THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

## SUGGESTION THAT PRIME MINISTER MEET PRESIDENT NIXON CONCERNING UNITED STATES ECONOMIC MEASURES

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister. In referring last evening to the economic program instituted by President Nixon and its effects on Canada the Prime Minister said that "I would certainly want to make sure that President Nixon is aware of the dilemma that he is creating for Canada in terms of our future orientation in this North American continent". In view of that statement, will the Prime Minister now undertake a personal meeting with the President of the United States, indeed perhaps an ongoing series of meetings if necessary, to bring such awareness home directly to the President from whom the thrust of United States policy obviously is emanating?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has made that suggestion before and my answer is the same as previously. If it is necessary to meet the President to make sure, as the quotation says, that he is aware, then I will, of course, envisage doing so. But the statement means exactly what it says, that I want to make sure that he is aware. There are divers methods of ensuring this.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, my previous suggestion related particularly to the surtax and this much broader question that the Prime Minister has opened up. Was the Prime Minister expressing doubt as to how the United States administration itself sees the future of U.S.-Canada trade relations, and this being the period during which United States policy toward Canada may jell and become firmly set, is this not the time for discussions with the President rather than after the event?

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the impression that the supplementary asked by the Leader of the Opposition is perhaps

[Mr. Marshall.]

more in the form of an argument. However, the Prime Minister might be allowed to reply if he wishes to do so.

**Mr. Stanfield:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, with respect, Your Honour, it was not an argument; my question was not phrased in those terms. I simply directed a question to the Prime Minister, a very important question at this time, asking whether, this being the period during which United States policy may be set, this is not the appropriate time for the Prime Minister to see and discuss these matters with the President of the United States rather than after that policy becomes set. I think that is a serious question that deserves a serious answer from the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the observation is correct that it would be important to make sure that the President is aware before, as the Leader of the Opposition said, his policies are set and have jelled. But I repeat that this only leads one to the conclusion that it is important that the President be made aware, and there are many ways of making him aware of our position. It can be done by a phone call, it can be done by correspondence, it can be done by meeting, it can be done by representations to his ministers, it can be done by diplomatic exchange. There is a whole series of ways of making representations, as I am sure the Leader of the Opposition knows.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the emphasis the Prime Minister himself has placed upon the serious consequences and high cost for Canada should the United States adopt, hypothetically at least, certain attitudes about which the Prime Minister has expressed concern, is there anything more important as far as Canada is concerned at this particular juncture than for the Prime Minister, as head of the government of Canada, to leave no stone unturned in making certain that the President understands these concerns?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Moose Jaw.

**Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, would the Prime Minister inform the House whether in his educated opinion the increase in unemployment as reported the other day by Statistics Canada is caused by United States protectionist policies?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member is inviting the Prime Minister to express an opinion and I would not think the question in those terms is in order.

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, has the Prime Minister either telephoned or written the President of the United States to make sure he understands how Canada feels about the economic policy announced by President Nixon on August 15, and has he learned from the President the United States attitude in regard to the Canadian employment support bill?

**Mr. Trudeau:** The answer is no to both questions, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Hees:** Would the Prime Minister then screw up his courage and either telephone or write to the President to make known Canada's views on this very important matter?