

Inquiries of the Ministry

tri-level conference. I would hope the Speaker would allow the House to revert to motions so the Prime Minister can make a statement.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair is always prepared to allow the House to go back to motions, but the hon. member might raise this matter as a question in due course. It is not a point of order.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**INFLATION—SEEKING OF STAND-BY POWERS RESPECTING CONSUMER CREDIT**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs whether it is the intention of the government to seek stand-by powers to regulate the terms of consumer credit, particularly down payments and length of time for payments?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I think the practice is that if the government is going to introduce legislation, it is announced in due course when the legislation is introduced.

[Later:]

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs whether it is his intention to give serious consideration to the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs with regard to the creation of stand-by powers to regulate the terms of consumer credit?

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, naturally that committee's report is receiving and will receive very careful consideration but any statement on consumer credit or change in the government's financial policy should come from my colleague, the Minister of Finance.

INFLATION—CONSENSUS REACHED BY NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRICE STABILITY—ACTION BY GOVERNMENT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs whether he is in a position today, which he apparently was not yesterday, to tell the House what the plans of the government are with regard to the consensus reached on Monday and Tuesday in the matter of restraints? Is the minister in a position to tell

[Mr. Alexander.]

the House what course of action the government intends to follow with regard to that consensus?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Well, I thought, Mr. Speaker, that in my very full answer yesterday I made it clear that we intended discussing the statement by the National Conference on Price Stability with the provincial premiers on Monday.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the desirable objective of the government to set an example in the problem of inflation, does the government intend industry to follow its example of a 9 per cent increase in costs during the year?

Mr. Basford: If we had followed the example we received from members opposite the increase would have been very much greater than it has been.

INFLATION—ACTION TO SEEK CO-OPERATION OF UNIONS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Haslings): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. In view of the widespread scepticism expressed yesterday by leaders of organized labour regarding the results obtained at the conference in Ottawa on Monday and Tuesday, would the minister take the first opportunity on motions to explain the full scope of these results and what role the government is going to ask organized labour to play in this national campaign to curtail inflation?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I believe that opportunity will arise this afternoon and this evening when the House will be debating the motion to be considered today, and I intend to speak on that motion.

Mr. Stanfield: Oh, you are going to tell us then, are you?

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, does the House have the assurance of the minister that he will answer that question specifically in the debate this afternoon? Yes or no?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Athabasca on a supplementary.

Mr. Hees: Get on your feet.

Mr. Stanfield: The minister of evasion.