

Inquiries of the Ministry

House whether the provinces requested the services of the President of the Treasury Board to assist them in trimming costs of various shared-cost programs, and whether his job will be that of an adviser or will he carry stronger and more persuasive powers?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there is general agreement between the provinces and federal government that one should do what one can in order to have these programs operate as efficiently as possible. We pay half the cost and they pay half the cost. What the President of the Treasury Board will be doing is consulting with the provinces and looking at methods for controlling costs in these programs, in the same way as there have been consultations, for example, between our Minister of National Health and Welfare and the various provincial ministers of health and welfare.

Mr. Ritchie: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of Premier Robarts' statement that Ontario might have to consider dropping some shared-cost programs, will the President of the Treasury Board be authorized to give advice on the best way this could be done?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt whether this question is in order.

SUGGESTED REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON
MARGARINE

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. A few days ago during questions on Orders of the Day the Minister of Finance indicated that consideration was being given by his department to the request of consumer groups which are urging that the 12 per cent federal sales tax be removed from margarine. Would the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs confer with his colleague on this anti-inflationary move?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder whether the question as asked is in order. The hon. member is simply suggesting that one minister communicate with another. In this sense, it is a representation and the hon. member must assume it has been noted.

[Mr. Ritchie.]

[Translation]

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

NON-INTERVENTION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN FIELDS OF PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister.

Following the latest federal-provincial conference, does the government still intend to intervene directly in fields within provincial jurisdiction should the provinces fail to adapt their legislation to that of the federal government with regard to the preservation of water, for instance?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible to intervene within fields out of our jurisdiction since the constitution prohibits it.

[English]

TRANSPORT

NORTHWEST PASSAGE—FUEL OIL TO BE
CARRIED BY "MANHATTAN" ON PRO-
JECTED SECOND VOYAGE

Mr. W. B. Nesbitt (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I had intended to direct my question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, but in view of his prolonged absence from the House I will direct it to the Minister of Transport. In view of the anticipated second journey of the supertanker *Manhattan* through the Northwest Passage, how many estimated tons of fuel oil will she be required to carry to safely ensure her passage on this long, dangerous, slow-moving and time-consuming voyage?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, after a few days with my sliderule I will let the hon. member know.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nesbitt: In view of the minister's answer, I suggest that he inquire how much it took the last time. I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister require the *Manhattan* to fly the Canadian flag while travelling through our waters, unlike the last time?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.