

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—SUGGESTED BETTER CO-ORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED TO ACHIEVE MORE UNIFIED ACTION

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, may I direct my question to the Prime Minister. Can we anticipate any announcement by the government which will result in better co-ordination between departments whose policies have a direct bearing on inflation—I am thinking of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Treasury Board, the Department of Finance and the Department of Manpower and Immigration particularly—so they can act in a more unified way?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the importance of consultation between all departments. We discussed this matter again today in the cabinet committee. I cannot say that there will be any announcement made in this regard, but I do hope we will be showing more and more that the government's various policies are interconnected and interdependent.

Mr. MacLean: I thank the Prime Minister for his reply. Has the Prime Minister established a cabinet committee to deal with the problem of inflation and try to contain it?

Mr. Trudeau: No, Mr. Speaker, this is dealt with in the cabinet committee which deals with all the aspects of economic policy because we want to make sure that in the ways in which we deal with inflation we act in full awareness of the other aspects of the economy.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—AVAILABILITY OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Two weeks ago the minister said in the House that he was considering the possibility of granting additional funds to counter the lack of money for local initiative projects. Today being December 11 and the unemployment situation having grown even worse, can the minister tell us whether he has made a decision and, if not, when he will be able to tell the House if there will be additional funds or not?

[English]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I answered a first question a few moments ago. No such decision has been made but I expect that to be done shortly.

Oral Questions

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

ALLEGED COMPLAINT BY MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT CONCERNING COVERAGE GIVEN GOVERNMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Peter Reilly (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Is he now prepared to make public, of his own volition, the text of the letter he wrote to the Prime Minister on November 8 complaining about CBC coverage of his government in British Columbia and demanding discipline and to indicate precisely what kind of discipline he had in mind?

Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of the Environment): No, I am not, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Reilly: Mr. Speaker, first, I did not hear the minister's answer; second, I have a supplementary. My supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. Is he prepared to assure the House that it is not the government's policy to interfere in the affairs of the CBC because it criticizes or allows criticism of government policy?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I must apologize. I missed the previous question to which this one is now related.

Mr. Stanfield: Was it because there was too much noise on the Prime Minister's side of the House?

Mr. Trudeau: No, it is because I was speaking to the minister sitting next to me about more important things.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I do wish to assure the hon. member that it is not our practice to interfere with the CBC.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Reilly: I have a further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Prime Minister precisely what it is in his view that transcends the importance in this country of freedom of speech?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, if I may be permitted to answer that, let me point out to the House that the previous question was not addressed to me and therefore I felt entitled to talk to the minister by my side while that question was being asked and answered. That is why I said I could not refer to the previous question. As far as the statement in general that was made is concerned, I did give the answer.

Mr. Hees: The Prime Minister is leaning over and speaking to the reporter instead of talking to the House.

Mr. Nielsen: The old arrogance is still there.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to be accused of arrogance because I refuse to shout in this House to cover the noise that the hon. member is making.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!