

budget presented to the House in December last was prepared with the Economic Council's forecast concerning capital spending in mind?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** We had our forecast for the oncoming year available to us, developed by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. It was based on that. Incidentally, it is very close to the forecast of the Economic Council.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Am I to gather from the minister's answer that he did not have available to him the forecast made by the Economic Council based upon returns compiled by the council as of October?

**Mr. Benson:** I have no secret access to the Economic Council.

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#### INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

**Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West):** I have a question for the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that an old age security pensioner from Trail wishes to return the lavish 42-cent raise recently granted by the government, will the minister accept this 42-cent contribution so as to ease the conscience—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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#### FINANCE

##### GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR 1971—PROPOSED PORTABLE WELFARE GRANT SCHEME

**Mr. S. Perry Ryan (Spadina):** My question is for the Minister of Finance. In light of the call by the Premier of British Columbia to declare a one-year moratorium on constitutional talks, and in face of the unemployment and economic difficulties in which the country finds itself, does the government now intend to outline its economic objectives and policies for 1971 and give a specific date for a full employment economy?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. member is asking the minister or someone on behalf of the government to make a statement very general in nature. I would not think this should be done at the present time.

**Mr. Ryan:** With respect, Your Honour, I was asking him to give a specific date for a full employment economy in Canada. This is very urgent.

**An hon. Member:** What time of the day?

**Mr. Speaker:** I would not think a question in those terms was in order. The hon. member might be allowed to rephrase the question.

**Mr. Ryan:** Will the government at least reconsider British Columbia's request for a portable welfare grant scheme under the Canada Assistance Plan?

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#### Inquiries of the Ministry

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** I think that is a matter for submission by British Columbia to the government. Of course, we always consider submissions by British Columbia. With respect to the economic forecast for 1971, I would suggest that the hon. member read my speech—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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#### GRAIN

##### PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON NEW AGREEMENT TO REPLACE INTERNATIONAL GRAINS ARRANGEMENT

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** I direct this question to the Minister of Manpower who reports to the Wheat Board. Is the minister now in a position to place before the House a general picture as to the degree of success or failure being attained by the conference in Geneva on international wheat matters?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Not yet, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Is there justification for the very strong rumour that there has been a virtual collapse of the discussions there, three weeks having gone by without any progress being made?

**Mr. Lang:** As my previous answer indicated, I do not think it would be timely to report to the House on these negotiations.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** When the minister, as ringmaster of the cabinet safari, goes to Saskatchewan on Friday or Saturday next, will one or other of the 20 cabinet ministers present, but not for athletic purposes, let the people of Saskatchewan and western Canada know what hope there is for the future in connection with the sale of wheat at a fair and reasonable price?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

##### SUGGESTED RESIGNATION OF CANADA FROM INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION FAILING INVESTIGATION OF LAOS SITUATION

**Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley):** My question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Will Canada consider resigning from the International Control Commission if it is not successful in persuading its fellow members of the commission to investigate the Laotian situation?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member will recognize that the question as asked is hypothetical.