

Oral Questions

CNR continue to deny them the increases in their pensions which justice clearly demands. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Beaches (Mr. Young):

● (1415)

That the federal government instruct the CPR and the CNR to finally do something substantial finally about railway pensions, implement the recommendations of the Hall Report on Pensions, and give these deserving pensioners their due, i.e., a retired life free from the threat of poverty.

Madam Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for this motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ECONOMY

WAGE AND PRICE CONTROLS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Is the government giving any consideration, now or at all, to the imposition in any form or to any extent of wage or price controls?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, if the hon. member is asking me to tell this House what discussions are going on in cabinet, he would be asking me to break my oath of office.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

INTEREST RATES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I am not asking the Prime Minister such a question at all. I would simply like an answer to the questions that I am putting to him. Is the government giving any consideration, now or at all, to the pegging of interest rates in this country?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, that is the same question in another form. He is asking me to comment on discussions in cabinet. If he wants to know whether outside of cabinet such things are being discussed, Madam Speaker, the answer is that I do not know.

EXCHANGE VALUE OF DOLLAR—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I am simply trying to establish government policy. Is the government giving

any consideration, now or at all, to the devaluation of the Canadian dollar?

An hon. Member: The further devaluation.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The same answer, Madam Speaker.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROLS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, it would appear that this government is vacuous on the question of policy. I make one final attempt. Is the government giving any consideration, now or at all, to the imposition in any form or to any extent of foreign exchange controls in this country?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the same answer, to the same type of question.

ECONOMIC POLICY—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is supplementary to those of my colleague, to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister went to Versailles vowing to force the United States to change its interest rate policy. Since he failed to achieve this, how can the Prime Minister justify to Canadians who are losing their jobs, or to home owners who are being forced to rollover their mortgages at increasing interest rates, or to his own caucus members, making the statement that he is not considering any fundamental changes in economic policy?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I indicated to the House yesterday that any announcement on the government's economic policy would be made by the Minister of Finance in this House before the session adjourns.

GOVERNMENT DEFICIT

Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister is very forthcoming today. There are many Canadians looking for the answers to the questions that we are putting to the Prime Minister. Let me put a supplementary question to him.

The Minister of Finance has for several months been blaming our high interest rates on the federal government deficit position in the United States. Since the Government of Canada budgetary deficit is proportionately almost twice the level of that which it is in the United States, is the Prime Minister asking Canadians to believe that his runaway deficit, the runaway deficit of his government, has nothing to do with the high interest rates in this country, and the weak Canadian dollar, and the bankruptcies and the lay-offs that have been caused by it?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Now I understand, Madam Speaker, why the hon. member and his prede-