

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimity.

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CANADA MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION COUNCIL ACT

PROVISION FOR ESTABLISHMENT, APPOINTMENT OF
MEMBERS

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-12, to establish a Canada Manpower and Immigration Council.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—INQUIRY AS TO LEGISLATION TO DEAL WITH
PROBLEM

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the government House leader. As the Prime Minister yesterday was unable to tell the House what effect the amendments to the Combines Investigation Act would have on inflation, can the government House leader now tell us if the government is going to introduce bills to deal with inflation and other problems mentioned in the Speech from the Throne within two weeks?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I would help the hon. member by referring him to the exchange between the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the hon. member for Saint John's West with respect to the relationship between the competition bill and the question of inflation. I think the connection is clear from that exchange. We have only two days before March 26 for government legislation. Following the first supply period, it will be possible to bring forward a number of bills affecting food production in Canada. I am sure my hon. friend would agree that food production has a direct relationship to the general question of price levels.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Has he prepared legislation and does he have legislation ready to introduce immediately to do something about the escalating cost of living?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there is a bill before the House which I think will make an important contribution to dealing with this matter. The government, as has been said on other occasions by the Prime Minister and other

Oral Questions

ministers, will be prepared to take the necessary steps that are required by the circumstances.

Mr. Gillies: Is the legislation ready, and can the minister tell us today when it will be presented?

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I think this is something for the leader of the House to comment on because the matter of legislation pertains to the government generally.

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SHIPPING

INQUIRY AS TO LEGISLATION TO RESERVE COASTING TRADE
FOR CANADIAN SHIPS—WITHDRAWAL BY CANADA FROM
BRITISH COMMONWEALTH SHIPPING AGREEMENT

Mr. Paddy Neale (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport may I direct my question to the parliamentary secretary. In light of the minister's public statement of September 28, 1973, that legislation would be forthcoming to ensure that the Canadian coasting trade would be reserved for Canadian registered bottoms, and as no reference was made to this legislation in the recent Speech from the Throne, would the minister tell the House whether he has changed his position in this regard and, if not, when the legislation will be introduced?

Mr. Joseph-Phillippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Soon, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Neale: In keeping with the assurances the minister gave the House on November 20, on December 17 and again on March 7 of this year, can the minister confirm that notice has been served on the government of the United Kingdom of Canada's intention to withdraw from the British Commonwealth Merchant Shipping Agreement and, if not, will the minister tell the House when that notice will at last be served?

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the minister is away on government business today. He will be back in the House on Monday and I am sure he will be pleased to answer the hon. member's question.

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● (1140)

[Translation]

FINANCE

PREDICTED FIFTY PER CENT LOSS IN BUYING POWER OF
CANADIANS—POSITION OF GOVERNMENT

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Finance is not present, I direct my question to the Prime Minister.

The economists of the Royal Bank of Canada declared recently that ten years hence, the Canadian dollar would be devaluated by 50 per cent, thus causing a similar drop in the buying power of Canadians. Has the Prime Minister read this report and, if so, what action does he intend to take to limit this expected loss of buying power?