

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[English]***FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS**

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ENSURE ECONOMIC STABILITY IN QUEBEC—POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN DATE OF CONFERENCE OF PREMIERS

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and I want to preface it by noting, as, I think is agreed by all parties in the House, that the essence of yesterday's election in Quebec was that the people of that province voted according to democratic principles to change the government of their province. But following appeals last night by the leader of the Prime Minister's party in Quebec for the economic milieu to remain calm, can the right hon. gentleman advise the House what steps he has taken or intends to take to make sure that this important message reaches investors in Canada or abroad?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I am sure the statement I made last night, and which I would willingly repeat today, is a clear indication that this government is dedicated to an inseparable Canada, a Canada which is indivisible. And we have only one mandate: it is to govern the whole country, including Quebec.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Whatever financial concerns the Leader of the Opposition may be referring to should know that this will continue to be our mandate and that we do not intend to negotiate any form of separatism with any province.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: I take it, then, that the Prime Minister is not planning to take, or has not taken, any special steps to try to deal with the concern about investment which was expressed last night by the leader of his party in the province of Quebec. If he should decide that it is necessary, on behalf of his government, to take any action of that kind, will he make the nature of that action known to the House? In the meantime, can he advise us whether, in the light of the change in the government of Quebec, there is any intention to revise the timing of the meeting of first ministers planned for next month?

Mr. Trudeau: As to the first part of the question, I believe the best way of making sure that no panic reaction takes place is to refrain from speculating upon it or asking hypothetical questions as the Leader of the Opposition has just done.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I have stated the basis on which the federal government will operate. As far as the second part of the question is concerned, I have already written, as is customary, to the premier-elect indicating we are planning to go ahead with the conference in mid-December but that I would be

[Mr. Speaker.]

writing to him, as I shall be writing to the other first ministers, to discuss the precise agenda.

Mr. Clark: I simply wish to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that the concern expressed was expressed by the leader of his party in the province of Quebec.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: If the Prime Minister considers it hypothetical, he should perhaps speak to the leader of his party in Quebec.

Mr. Fairweather: Or tell Lalonde to speak to Bronfman.

Mr. Clark: Is it the intention of the Prime Minister to take the initiative by meeting with the new prime minister of Quebec prior to the meeting of the heads of government?

● (1410)

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I failed to get the second part of the question; it seemed to be a repetition of the first as far as I heard it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In respect of the repetition, the question was rather definitive. It was whether it was the intention of the Prime Minister to have a special meeting with the premier-elect of the province of Quebec prior to the prime minister's conference in December.

Mr. Trudeau: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not given that any active consideration yet, but if the premier wishes to meet with me I will, of course, be open to meet with him on the basis I have just stated. As far as the preface to the question is concerned, I did not realize that it was a justification for the Leader of the Opposition to be quoting the person he calls "the leader of my party in Quebec". Obviously, he has no leader of his party in Quebec.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

UNEMPLOYMENT—POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF BUDGET TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question also for the Prime Minister. Given the fact that the Liberal government in the province of Quebec was defeated precisely for ignoring basic, real problems like the 10 per cent unemployment level in that province, and given the fact that the national government here in Ottawa has been following precisely the same kinds of policies at the national level, I would ask the Prime Minister whether this election and its real and serious implications have caused him and his colleagues overnight to rethink the unemployment situation in particular, in such a way that the Prime Minister will now assure the House that the government will bring before the House a budget prior to Christmas announcing a full employment program.