

Oral Questions

Mr. Fraser: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the Canadian Labour Relations Council was not used with respect to the anti-inflation program. In view of the Prime Minister's remarks this morning to the effect that he desires the co-operation of labour in preparing for the situation at the completion of the control program, and in view of the Minister of Labour's hope that labour will co-operate by continuing membership in certain boards, such as the manpower consultative committee, the UIC advisory council, the Economic Council of Canada and the Canada Labour Relations Council, can the minister tell this House whether the government, in order to secure what we all realize to be the necessary co-operation of labour, is now prepared to discuss with the CLC some process for multilateral discussions outside of the Canadian Labour Relations Council to ensure better understanding and co-operation among all sectors of the economy, especially with regard to the culmination or completion of the anti-inflation control program?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Prime Minister indicated this morning at the meeting with the CLC that that suggestion on Mr. Morris' part would be well worth exploring.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS**ROLE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN PROPOSED NEW SOCIETY**

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. The Prime Minister said this morning that the government would want to discuss with the CLC what kind of economy and society we will need for the future. Does this indicate that the government plans significant changes in the process of free collective bargaining after the control period is ended and, if so, in order to have meaningful discussions when will the government put precise proposals to labour and to parliament for discussion? I am not referring to the same discussions that have taken place in the Canada Labour Relations Committee but to any new ideas with respect to the role of free collective bargaining in this new society that the right hon. Prime Minister spoke of this morning.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the discussions that go on in the Canada Labour Relations Council, that is precisely where changes and improvements in the whole collective bargaining system might very well be agreed upon which would help us in terms of the type of society that we have after the control period is over. That is where these discussions are in fact taking place.

SUGGESTED WITHDRAWAL OF LABOUR REPRESENTATION FROM GOVERNMENT BODIES

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour. Since the Canadian Labour Congress is considering withdrawing from the Canadian Labour Relations Council and other

[Mr. Munro (Hamilton East).]

bodies, and in light of the statement by Mr. Morris this morning that the CLC is prepared to discuss with the government policies for the decontrol period, has the minister received any significant indication that the CLC will leave these bodies, and in any event is the minister going to speak directly to the executive of the CLC about this situation?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it has been made public and is well known that the CLC has been considering withdrawing from some of these bodies. They have not been too explicit on precisely which bodies they will consider withdrawing from and have taken no action yet. I believe they will be meeting tomorrow and the next day on this particular question. It is my hope, and I believe the hope of the government, that the CLC will not withdraw, on the basis that it would not be in the interests of the labour movement, its membership or the Canadian people generally.

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ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM**POSSIBILITY OF SHORTENING CONTROL PERIOD**

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the input of the Minister of Labour as to the time when the decontrol will start still firmly and absolutely aimed at the 3-year period provided in the legislation or could the time be shorter, in view of the situation in which the CLC and the Canadian Economic Policy Committee of the C.D. Howe Institute have suggested that wage and price controls should be terminated in as short a time as possible, possibly within 18 months?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): There has been no indication, Mr. Speaker, on the part of the government, certainly in any way to the labour movement that this period will be any shorter than that stipulated in the legislation.

SUGGESTION LABOUR SHARE IN PRODUCTIVITY GAINS—REQUEST FOR INCREASES IN MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Although the minister knows that companies can have virtually unlimited profits under the government's program if they show that excess profits are due to unusual productivity gains, the restriction on Canadian workers for increases beyond the guidelines have been set at 2 per cent, at least according to our understanding up to this morning anyway, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance whether the Minister of Labour was stating new government policy when he suggested that workers in Canada would be able to share precisely in the same way as corporations in unusual productivity gains?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, the Minister of Labour was making that comment in the context of doing away with restrictive labour and other practices.