

Oral Questions

tion of the government of Canada, and we hope to have the results of that study within a matter of months.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, as it has been represented that the Canada Pension Plan will pass a threshold on or before 1982 at which time benefit payments will exceed tax revenue, would the minister indicate what steps he intends to take to ensure that the Canada Pension Plan will be properly funded and not become a burden upon future taxpayers?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): This is a matter which has received some consideration by the government. In terms of our priorities in examining the pension system, however, it seems clear from representations made in this House that our first priority should be to examine the tax measures which affect the private pension system before proceeding to deal with the Canada Pension Plan.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, as there is a great hodge-podge of governmental pension plans at all levels of government, some funded and some not, would the minister indicate if he would be willing to go further and not just have the study he has referred to but also have a reference to the appropriate standing committee of this House to determine what are the aggregate commitments at this time for future pensions and to what extent these commitments are without funding? As such they may become a burden on future taxpayers.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I would be glad to consider the suggestion. I am sure the House leaders might have something to say about the use of the time of the House in that way, but I personally would have no difficulty with the suggestion.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY**TEXTILE AND CLOTHING IMPORT QUOTAS—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Is he in a position to inform the House about the present situation of the government's decision announced toward the end of November concerning import quotas of cloth, clothing and threads, to protect the Canadian textile industry?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact import quotas for 1975 were put into effect on November 29 last. We have provided some special allowances in the most difficult cases. The Textile and Clothing Board is reviewing such cases. At the present time, most of them have been reviewed by the board, and I believe the policy as announced to protect the textile and clothing industry in Canada is operating very well right now.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

Is the minister aware of the disastrous effect of this decision upon those who earn their living in small enterprises specialized in woollens, for example, retailing clothes that the Canadian textile industry has never manufactured?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that the policy provided for flexibility and that as regards some exclusivities, the Textile and Clothing Board has the power to recommend additional quotas, when the textiles are not manufactured in Canada as, for example some Irish woollens and so on. Each shop facing such problems could make representations to the Textile and Clothing Board, and I am informed that generally some arrangements were made.

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[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**STATEMENT OF MINISTER ON GOVERNMENT'S ACCOMMODATION OF LABOUR—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Prime Minister. In view of the unusual comments of the Minister of Labour about the relationship between the NDP and the CLC and about the so-called new accommodation with the Liberal party, which comments have already drawn a blunt rebuttal from Mr. Morris, President of the CLC, and Mr. Pilkey, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour, who said, and I quote: "There is no way labour can find any accommodation within the Liberal party"—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fraser:—can the Acting Prime Minister advise whether the statement of the minister was made with the approval of the Prime Minister and his cabinet colleagues?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, before answering the question directly, I wonder if I could draw to the attention of the House the historic speech which the Prime Minister made today in Washington.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: I should like to congratulate him upon the great service he did for our country in his presentation today.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Paproski: Why doesn't he do the same in this House?

Mr. MacEachen: In reply to the question of the hon. member, I am aware of no effort by the Liberal party to seek an accommodation with the Canadian Labour Congress. I am sure what the Minister of Labour had in mind was the continuing effort of the government to engage in consultation, not only with the labour movement in Canada but also with the business community, in order to address some of the serious economic problems facing the country.