

*Oral Questions*

am not yet aware of the precise time. With regard to the hon. member's question, if he and other members from the area are to be involved I think this would be up to the Minister of Transport to decide.

**Mr. Muir:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker. For quite a number of years in this House members from a province could ask a minister from that particular province questions about matters other than those looked after by his department. Then, Your Honour made a ruling that, for instance, members from Nova Scotia could not ask the minister from Nova Scotia any questions about matters other than those pertaining to his portfolio. In this way, many times he could avoid answering many questions because he was not responsible for those matters to the House.

**Mr. Bell:** Heavy water, for example.

**Mr. Muir:** A moment ago a question was directed to the Minister of Transport. It was then redirected to the Minister of Labour, who I am sure has nothing to do with transport matters which I think would be for the Minister of Transport. The question related to a particular area of Ontario. Now that the precedent has been reset once again, I hope that members from Nova Scotia will be in a much better position to pose questions to the minister from Nova Scotia, questions pertaining to the office of the President of the Privy Council, especially with regard to the announcements that he makes about everything under the sun.

**Mr. Specker:** Order. The hon. member has raised an interesting point. Without getting involved in a discussion may I say that the rule was made not by me but is of long standing. In this respect I can quote to the hon. member a number of past rulings and a citation from Beauchesne. If the supplementary question asked a moment ago was asked of the minister as representing an area or district, then it was entirely out of order and should not have been asked. I was so busy looking at the back rows to see who might next be recognized that I did not follow as closely as I should the question that was being asked by way of a supplementary. If the question was asked of the minister in his capacity as representing an area, then it was certainly out of order, and that is my ruling. Orders of the day.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Speaker, may I raise a point of order having to do with House business and the very interesting point that was raised previously. Might I suggest to the Chair that no decision on the matter be made, and also bring forward for the consideration of the government House leader the suggestion that one of the first items of business for the procedure committee, which will engage itself in a discussion of the questions put before it by the terms of reference, be this particular issue. While it is not necessarily binding on Your Honour, this was done in 1968, I think, when certain guidelines were laid down. I suggest that the question period and the answers given might well be considered a priority item for the committee on procedure and organization so that this question period might be made more useful and meaningful.

**Mr. Speaker:** Orders of the day.

[Mr. Munro.]

• (1510)

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS****THE BUDGET****FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE**

The House resumed, from Friday, February 23, consideration of the motion of the Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the amendment of Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West) (p. 1526).

[Translation]

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, it is not without emotion that I rise in this House, which you chair with so much competence and fairness, in my capacity as elected representative of the people. I have delivered many speeches during my life, but this one is not at all similar to the others. The opinions which I will submit today are proceeding from a mandate solemnly given through a democratic election.

Curiously enough I solicited this somewhat frightening responsibility which now falls upon me of representing others, and which is so personal and so total a commitment. The democratic process requires one to take the initiative of this office in its first stages. Such an enterprise may seem presumptuous, for who can claim to speak for others? Yet, this is necessary.

The only way to adequately fulfil this duty of representation is to listen to those who elect us and to reflect their concerns as much as possible. Then it is important to agree to the duty of pondering on the needs and expectations of the electorate and to restate them from the point of view of the legislator.

Then the time comes to project these conclusions in a debate in parliament, as I am doing today. Hon. members on the other side of the House also take part in this process. Their analyses and criticisms lend a character of full representativeness to our proceedings.

Parliamentarism is the very basis of our democracy as it is a means to have those especially elected by their constituents to insure the welfare and the progress of the people through adequate and progressive legislation. Freedom of speech in the House is indeed the best means to ensure our century old parliamentary institutions their strength and forever present characteristics.

This is why I am particularly happy to have this opportunity to comment on a budget which has been presented in such a clear and rigorous way by the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner).

Last Monday's budget is a significant answer to the needs of the average class of people who make up most of the constituency of Montreal-Ahuntsic.

Mr. Speaker, families in my constituency earn \$8,000, \$12,000 or \$15,000 a year. They are made up of two to four children, they own a car, a garden and some of them have a cottage. Here is a still more meaningful fact I am glad to tell the House. The Ahuntsic constituency is one where the education level is the highest.