

the petroleum administration bill, that it would be necessary to provide moneys to pay the subsidy and maintain the equalization of oil prices in eastern Canada. The government will ask for special funds to meet the cost until the end of the fiscal year. I would, therefore, ask that a special order be approved in the following terms:

That a supplementary estimate presented to the House on Monday, December 16, 1974 shall not be referred to a standing committee but a minister of the Crown may move a motion to concur in such a supplementary estimate and any bill based thereon may be read a first time immediately the said supplementary estimate is presented; and

The said bill may be advanced any number of stages in any one sitting.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is agreed and so ordered.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, may I say that I assume, after the slight difficulty the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) experienced the other day, that this bill will deal only with the matter proposed and that no extraneous and unusual clauses will be inserted in it.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I shall endeavour to see that this is so.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—PERSON OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCUSSIONS SEEKING CONSENSUS OF VARIOUS GROUPS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Finance who is in charge of the informal discussions which have taken place on the achievement of consensus, discussions which the minister anticipates will resume early in the new year. Is the Minister of Finance responsible for these discussions, or is the Prime Minister, or are they so confidential that they are in the hands of the RCM Police?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this is completely a governmental initiative and the Prime Minister therefore will have the responsibility. I will have, also, a general overview of general economic aspects. Much of the discussion will be conducted by ministers with particular responsibility for the sectors being talked about.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, the responsibility seems to be well spread around, particularly since the Minister of Finance does not intend to carry the can. Has any structure been established which is to be responsible for planning and developing the approach to consensus? Has any bureaucratic structure been established for this purpose. If so, who is at the head of it?

Oral Questions

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, yes, a special unit or task force has been established to co-ordinate and set up the schedule for this exercise. I do not know at the moment whether I am at liberty to describe the personnel of the structure, but I will consider that request.

INFLATION—TYPE OF GROUPS WITH WHOM DISCUSSIONS HELD IN SEEKING CONSENSUS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a final supplementary question. Obviously, this operation is being conducted with a great deal of security, even though it is not being conducted by the RCM Police. Perhaps the Minister of Finance can say with whom discussions are being held, with what sorts of groups. Have they been held with separate individuals, or with groups representing principal elements in the economy. One is under the impression that there have not been discussions with Mr. Morris, the head of the CLC. With whom have these discussions or meetings taken place?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, several discussions have been held with leaders of several major unions in this country and also a representative selection of business leaders. When the exploratory stage begins in January, we will be able to convey to the House and to the country the form these conversations are taking and with whom they are being held.

● (1120)

INFLATION—PROPOSALS TO INDUSTRY IN SEEKING CONSENSUS OF VARIOUS GROUPS

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a further question to the Minister of Finance. I would like him to be a little more specific concerning meetings with industry. How many meetings have been held? In those exploratory talks, did the government make any suggestion, or do they intend to make any suggestion, to industry that price increases should be limited in future to cost increases and no more?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the parameters within which we are going to be working will be made clear to the House when the exploratory stage is completed.

INFLATION—POSSIBLE INCOME TAX CUT TO RESTORE BUYING POWER TO CONSUMER

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): In view of widespread forecasts of economic slump in Canada and with retail sales, seasonally adjusted, down for the last three consecutive months and in view of the minister's own forecast in his November 18 budgetary papers that revenue from personal taxation will jump 43.5 per cent in the two years ending in fiscal year 1976, almost twice the projected increase in personal incomes, will the minister indicate if he is considering giving a tax cut or some other relief to personal taxpayers in order to restore more buying power to the consumers of this country?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, substantial tax cuts were announced in the