

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL REASSURANCE

Mr. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Madam Speaker, I asked my question for a simple reason. I will put the question again. The Minister of Finance knows full well that the 1979 budget listed for the first time the departmental views. In the minister's 1981 budget when he said he accepted the whole idea of the \$4.5 billion his department believes ought to be taxed, that home owners somehow get a benefit by not paying any rent, the minister implied for the first time that he will tax it. Having said to home owners he will not tax them, will the minister make it this much clearer to home owners by saying that the whole idea of imputing an income to a home owner, having saved all his life to buy a home, because he no longer pays rent, is morally wrong? Will he say that clearly today to those home owners he has scared?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I reject entirely the suggestion that in any way that fear has been aroused by me in this case. The fear commenced with an irresponsible letter sent out by a high officer in the Dominion Life Insurance Company. That is when the concern developed. I have attempted to allay the concern by stating categorically that the government never had any intention, does not presently entertain any intention, nor will it entertain an intention in the future to tax imputed rent. That is the end of the matter as far as I am concerned.

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INTERNAL ECONOMY COMMISSION

SALARIES OF HOUSE OF COMMONS EMPLOYEES

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Treasury Board in his capacity as a member of the Commissioners of Internal Economy. The President of the Treasury Board knows that the government has said it will not freeze the salaries of federal public servants. Can we have an assurance that it is not the intention of the Commissioners of Internal Economy to freeze the salaries of the people who serve the House of Commons and that they will be treated in the same way with respect to salaries as are federal public servants?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board): The question of freezing the salaries of people who work on the Hill, as Madam Speaker well knows, has never been considered by the Commissioners of Internal Economy.

● (1150)

COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION—REQUEST FOR EXPANSION OF MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to my friend, the government House leader. With respect to the composition of the Commission of Internal Economy, is the government giving any consideration to expanding and changing the membership

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of the board of the Commission of Internal Economy to include privy councillors drawn from the opposition? If the government has not considered that thus far, would it take a look at this proposal as a way of improving or assisting the administration of the House of Commons, since the administration of the House of Commons is really the business of all members of the House of Commons?

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, if my hon. colleague could elaborate a little more on his suggestion and perhaps put it in writing, I would be prepared to take it into consideration and see how it would improve services to members and other aspects of our parliamentary life. I would surely welcome such ideas, but I would like to understand better what the hon. member has in mind. I would like to be able to see how things could be improved. I think so far the Commissioners of Internal Economy have done a wonderful job to improve services to hon. members on both sides of the House. If the hon. member has better ideas, I am surely willing to consider them.

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CANADA POST

ACHIEVEMENT OF ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Mr. Bud Bradley (Haldimand-Norfolk): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the minister responsible for the Canada Post Corporation. The minister will be aware that the president of the corporation has expressed some reservations about the possibility of meeting the deadline for self-sufficiency of the corporation. I wonder if the minister could tell the House whether the government is considering changing the deadline for self-sufficiency imposed on the Canada Post Corporation.

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member misunderstood what was said by the president of the Canada Post Corporation. I believe he is referring to a media report that apparently claimed the president had no intention of following the objectives set by the government, and I understand that when the president appeared before a parliamentary committee, he was able to clarify this matter. There is no conflict as far as I know.

[English]

POSTAL RATES

Mr. Bud Bradley (Haldimand-Norfolk): Madam Speaker, not only did the president of the Canada Post Corporation say he had some reservations about meeting the guideline, but other members of the corporation have also expressed that concern. Since the government is not anticipating any amendment to the program and to the deadline set, obviously the corporation would be left with two alternatives, to reduce