

Oral Questions

the urge to catch up with respect to wages and prices. What is dangerous is that current settlements are anticipating rates of inflation which project the rate effective in 1974, and if this continues to happen, it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy and this country will be put into a very dangerous international position.

An hon. Member: What are you doing about it?

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, the minister must recognize that he did not even remotely answer my question. I would like to ask him how much patience he expects me or any member of this House to have with regard to a consensus program which was promised as long ago as the Speech from the Throne and which has been followed only by postponement and evasion. I and my colleagues have been prepared to exercise restraint and to withhold demands for stimulation in the economy in order to give the minister a reasonable time to get his consensus plan into operation and to give him more freedom of action. In response to that patience, I want the minister to give me the assurance that before the Easter recess he will give the House an open and frank statement as to what this consensus program is all about.

● (1510)

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I can give the hon. gentleman an assurance that when it is appropriate to make that statement it will be made. In the meantime, I appreciate the statesmanlike attitude that the hon. member has adopted.

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FOREIGN INVESTMENT REVIEW ACT

POSSIBLE AGREEMENT WITH PROVINCES TO DELAY PROCLAMATION OF PART II

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Has the government agreed to the requests of the provincial governments to further delay proclamation of Part II of the Foreign Investment Review Act and, if so, will this delay be for an indefinite period or has the government now set a date by which time the second part of the act dealing with new investment will be proclaimed in force?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I think the provincial ministers and I had a very useful and constructive meeting yesterday. We reviewed the administration of Part I and the provinces agreed on the six principles of consultation. We also discussed the question of the guidelines which are an integral part of the Part II proclamation. Provincial ministers asked for more time to consider and understand an admittedly complicated set of guidelines. The House may remember that I put forth a set of guidelines at the end of 1973 and asked for comments from the provinces and from industry. We put forward another set of draft regulations after consideration. I would expect there would be a meeting within the next three weeks at the deputy minister level of the various provinces with senior officials of the Foreign Investment Review Agency to

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

conclude the consultation process with respect to those guidelines and the preparatory steps for second proclamation.

Mr. Gray: A supplementary—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville.

An hon. Member: He has a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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TRANSPORT

SUGGESTED INQUIRY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THOSE CHARGED IN CONNECTION WITH DREDGING CONTRACTS MADE CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLITICAL PARTIES

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question for the Acting Prime Minister goes back to the first topic today. In view of the fact that he has not agreed to a public inquiry under the Inquiries Act will the Acting Prime Minister agree to an investigation in order to determine whether those corporations and individuals who have been charged have made contributions to political parties and if so, to which parties, how much and when?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Nystrom: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that under the investigation that is being carried out this type of thing will not come to light because the election legislation was not proclaimed until August 1, will the Acting Prime Minister agree to investigate the political connection between those charged and—

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. gentleman that the presumption of innocence until proven guilty is fundamental to our system.

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[Translation]

TRANSPORT

SUGGESTION GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKE DREDGING OPERATIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister a question. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that my hon. friends opposite do not rejoice too much in the tribulations of the "in-laws", in Quebec.

Here is my question, Mr. Speaker, which is directed to the Acting Prime Minister: given the surprising development of the dredging contracts affair, and considering that on this subject the market is in such a state and that for all practical purposes real competition is impossible, as emphasized recently by the Minister of Transport, would the minister now feel that the lesson has been learned and