

ACCEPTANCE BY MINISTER OF ADVICE BY TECHNICAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PETROLEUM SUPPLY AND
DEMAND

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and is based on his earlier answer this afternoon. May I ask him why he would accept the advice of the technical advisory committee on petroleum supply and demand when the membership of the committee and the qualifications of the members are unknown to him?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has had some experience as a Privy Councillor and knows that within departments, under existing departmental structures, the best men would be selected for the job.

Some hon. Members: Who?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I would contest directly the hon. gentleman's implication that the officials representing the various departments are anything less than competent.

GASOLINE AND HEATING OIL—SUGGESTION THAT
PROVINCES REDUCE TAXES

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister with regard to the question previously asked by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe. In view of the fact the Prime Minister has talked about a just society, and in view of the fact he established a special Department of Regional Economic Expansion because of the regional economic disparity that exists in the Atlantic Provinces, how can he now suggest to the House that the provincial governments in those regionally depressed areas of Canada should reduce their taxes in order to—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. That is clearly argument. The hon. member for Lotbinière.

Mr. Coates: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member rises on a question of privilege, and also the hon. member for Lotbinière. I will hear the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North first.

Mr. Coates: Mr. Speaker, this question is vital. If I do not get an answer, there is no reason for my being here. This government has stated it has taken special action to try to eliminate regional economic disparities in our area. At the same time the Prime Minister stands up and suggests that the provincial governments cut their taxes even though the taxes are not sufficient in themselves to look after the people in that region. I am asking the federal government what it is going to do to reduce taxes—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have indicated that a question asked in those terms is not in order. The hon. member rises on a question of privilege. The right hon. Prime Minister wants to rise on the same question of privilege. I will recognize him and then the hon. member

Oral Questions

for Lotbinière on a question of privilege, after which we will go to the order of the House which we have for consideration at this time.

Mr. Trudeau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will not get into debate on the question of regional economic expansion because I think the record of the government stands for itself.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: But, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the hon. member, I must recall the facts to him. Last September 4, because of federal government action, we were able to assure that there would be a price freeze in these eastern provinces, a freeze at the then existing level in spite of the fact that prices of international oil were going up considerably. After a long period of time during which those provincial governments have had very high taxes on petroleum products in their provinces and when the people of Ontario and the people of the west were paying high prices for petroleum from Alberta, I think it is pushing it a bit far and it is a little bit much that now those provincial governments expect the federal taxpayers to bail them out when the sheikhs of Araby have increased their prices.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[*Translation*]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

POSSIBILITY OF LEGISLATION BEFORE CHRISTMAS ON
PROVISION OF CAPITAL IN SLOW GROWTH REGIONS

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

Is it true that before Christmas the federal government plans to introduce in the House an important fundamental bill to establish a policy on the regionalization of capital, and if so, when will it be announced?

Mr. Speaker: I thought the hon. member was rising on a question of privilege. He has put his question; the minister may reply to it, after which I shall call orders of the day.

[*English*]

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I do not anticipate bringing in legislation in precisely the form the hon. member has referred to, at least as I understood him amidst the din. On the other hand, there will be announcements made—some have already been made—with a view to assuring that there is in fact additional capital in the slower growth regions of the provinces. If there is anything more specific I will be glad to discuss it with the hon. member.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member on a question of privilege.