

Oral Questions

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

SUGGESTED REFORM OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the right hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the unconceivable fate of Bill C-2 after 37 sessions in committee, to give just one example, is the Prime Minister prepared to consider an in-depth reform of the parliamentary procedure in order to modernize Parliament, make it more efficient and attuned to the Canadian reality and also reevaluate the role of the representative, whatever his party?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I agree entirely with the hon. member's point of asking. I take the liberty of reminding him that in October, in a speech in the House, I indicated my own concern about the situation of parliamentary rules and the importance of modernizing them. Mr. Speaker, I cannot but support the hon. member when he addresses himself to members of all parties. The government, for its part, is very anxious to reform that institution so that it becomes modern and worthwhile, and we hope members of all parties will come to an agreement without partisan considerations to work towards this end.

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[English]

TRADE

REQUEST FOR MEASURES TO IMPROVE COMPETITIVE
POSITION OF CANADIAN INDUSTRIES

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Before asking it, I would like to say that I know the Prime Minister is very disappointed he could not be in the House yesterday to wish me a happy birthday. I would like to assure him on this important occasion that I feel very well and so strong that I am going to volunteer to be his coach and sparring partner as he trains for a very important wrestling match he will take part in next year when he takes part in the 1976 olympics by wrestling inflation to the ground in front of the main grandstand.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: Not only do I think I can teach him some elusive moves that will enable him to win that match against this most wily opponent, but he will simply electrify that large crowd as well. My question is this. As 75 per cent of Canadian production is sold in the Canadian market and as a steadily increasing proportion of that market is being lost each year to imports as Canadians in ever increasing numbers are switching to foreign products because of price, quality and design, is it the plan of the government in the near future to introduce incentives which will induce greater productivity, more research and development in this country so that our products may become more competitive and thereby stop the present recession from turning into a depression?

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is an unfortunate coincidence that I happened to be speaking to senior citizens yesterday when I could have been here speaking to one of the more eminent members of that group.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: However, it is perhaps a happy coincidence that I was enjoining them to participate very actively in the life of the community in every way. I welcome the offer by the hon. member to give me some lessons in physical adroitness which he could very well do except, perhaps, in some areas like skiing where I—

Mr. Hees: We will have a race next winter. I will hold you to that.

Mr. Trudeau: The concern which the hon. member expresses is one which is shared by this government, namely ensuring that our products are competitive, not only price-wise, but in terms of technology and excellence. I can assure the hon. member that his representations will be very well examined by this government as we examine all representations from senior citizens.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON PAROLE FOR DR. MORGENTALER

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It is further to a matter raised by the hon. member for Fundy Royal on June 11 regarding Dr. Morgentaler. Could the Prime Minister say whether any further consideration has been given to the granting of parole by exception, as is provided for under the National Parole Act, to Dr. Morgentaler.

● (1440)

Mr. Speaker: The question has already been answered.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REASON FOR INCREASE IN TOTAL AMOUNT OF BENEFIT
PAYMENTS

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): I know the Minister of Manpower and Immigration is primed with facts about the report from Statistics Canada that gross benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act have increased by 20 per cent in one month, that is, from March to April of this year, and 69 per cent in one year, namely, from April last year to April this year, during a period when such payments usually decrease. I wonder whether the minister could give us the explanation which has been prepared for him to account for this massive upswing in unemployment insurance benefits.