

Oral Questions

[English]

THE ROYAL FAMILY

SYMBOLISM OF VISIT BY PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Madam Speaker, upon meeting the Princess of Wales yesterday she expostulated that they were "overwhelmed with the warm welcome of Canadians". We Canadians were overwhelmed with the Royal couple's idyllic love, social grace, and personification of the democratic system. What a breath of fresh air they represent, as opposed to the socialist hordes in front of me and to my left.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stewart: Perhaps the socialist gathering this evening at Kingsmere will be awakened to what their Royal Highnesses really represent—freedom—and will be awakened particularly to the fact that socialism destroys morale, terminates initiative and incentive, and leaves a nation apathetic and listless.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stewart: The mythological Royal couple represents the victory of the democratic head of Government over the frugal—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Stewart: The mythological Royal couple represents the victory of the democratic head of Government over the frugal, melancholy mantle of imposed state control known as socialism. The Royal pair symbolizes the free world, no longer the divine right of kings, and in real flesh and blood. They are the living embodiment of over 1,000 years of tradition, of our parliamentary system and all the rights and freedoms—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stewart:—we cherish so dearly, the traditions, languages, rights and freedoms which have been systematically eroded by the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). To Your Royal Highnesses, our unswerving love and loyalty for all that you represent. Hurry back, and God bless.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICE

NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION—SALARIES OF EMPLOYEES

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance and it is really a follow up to yesterday's questioning of the Minister for apparently asking those in the country to follow his word as opposed to the Government's action.

Yesterday, in reply to the suggestion on my part that many in the Public Service have exceeded the six and five guidelines, the Minister threw out a challenge to me. He said, "I challenge the Hon. Member to prove that the average salary of employees working, for instance, for the National Capital Commission has increased more than 6 per cent". Would the Minister indicate to the House, when he threw out that challenge, was he unaware of the fact that in Main Estimates 84, the average salary in the National Capital Commission was \$30,344, compared to 1983 when the average salary was \$25,669, an increase of 18.2 per cent?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I would have been very happy to hear an introductory comment by the Hon. Member referring to the fact that today we have heard excellent news on the Consumer Price Index, that we have for the eleventh month a straight decline in inflation in this country—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde:—and that from May of last year to this year, we have had an inflation rate of only 5.4 per cent.

An Hon. Member: Answer the question.

Mr. Lalonde: That is the smallest increase recorded since December, 1972.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lalonde: I believe that clearly indicates that the measures taken by the Government, together with Canadians, have produced excellent results, and that in effect the six and five program, together with the other measures taken by provincial Governments, municipalities, and by everyone in the private sector, has produced excellent results for the country. We have succeeded in bringing inflation down quite significantly, and we will be able to ensure more jobs and more growth for the Canadian economy in the year to come, thanks to this excellent progress.

As far as the question raised by the Hon. Member is concerned, I must remind him, as I indicated yesterday, that one has to take into account several factors. Parliament passed legislation imposing a 6 per cent and 5 per cent maximum increase on public servants. That is the law under this Parliament, and that is what is being applied. The Hon. Member knows that collective agreements expire at different times, and Parliament decided not to roll back those agreements in effect. Therefore, there were increases coming into effect which were in excess of 6 per cent past last June and which would show up in those results. But what is important—

• (1420)

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!