

Inquiries of the Ministry

of the provinces and those who sell products in Canada, does it intend to hold similar meetings with important economic groups, whose actions have an important effect on inflation, so that the government's program for controlling inflation may have the best possible chance of success?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we have frequent meetings with important economic groups, to use the hon. member's expression. We have them throughout the year.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I will make my question a little clearer. Does the government take the attitude that any anti-inflation program can be successful without the active co-operation of the organized labour movement?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: Do members of the government, and the Prime Minister in particular, plan to have meetings with the leaders of organized labour and make a personal appeal to them for that active co-operation which is vitally important to the success of the government's anti-inflation program?

Mr. Trudeau: On the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. We do not take that position. On the contrary, we think that the fight against inflation cannot be won without the active support of all sections of the community, and particularly the working sector of the community known as organized labour. Replying to the second part of the question, I may say that the whole cabinet will be meeting with the two main labour organizations in the country in some weeks to come. They have asked to meet cabinet, to present their views on the economic situation and other matters.

Mr. Hees: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the statement yesterday by the executive vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress that the government's proposals are far too vague to be taken seriously, does the Prime Minister consider that waiting for a number of weeks before having a general meeting, which governments have each year with our labour bodies, is satisfactory? Would he also advise the House—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps before the hon. member asks a further supplementary question I might suggest to him that the

[Mr. Hees.]

supplementary question he has just addressed to the Prime Minister is argumentative. I recognize that he has a further supplementary to ask and he will be allowed to ask it.

Mr. Hees: With great respect, Mr. Speaker, Your Honour knows I try never to be argumentative. May I direct another supplementary question to the Prime Minister. Was the possible application of sanctions against those who do not comply with the guidelines that were agreed to at the meeting with management a week ago discussed at the meetings that took place during the past two days? If so, is any action planned in this regard by the federal and provincial governments?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would consult the communique which was tabled earlier, he would see what recommendations made by the Prices and Incomes Commission to governments were considered and generally agreed to by the members present at the federal-provincial conference. One of the subjects referred to at the conference was sanctions.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Prime Minister if the government plans to take any action in this regard?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As a result of the conference held between the Prime Minister and provincial premiers, did the Prime Minister ask provincial governments to join with the federal government in concurrent action in order to give the Prices and Incomes Commission the necessary power to impose sanctions? If so, what was the nature of those sanctions and what reply did the Prime Minister receive from the provincial premiers?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, there was no indication at any time to my knowledge that the Prices and Incomes Commission should be empowered to impose sanctions. Sanctions, if they come, will come from the governments which represent the people. They will come from either the federal or provincial governments.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Prime Minister to what sanctions he asked the provincial governments to commit their respective jurisdictions. What response has he received from the provincial premiers in this regard?