

Inquiries of the Ministry

a little by telling him that a favourable decision has now been made and an announcement of the terms will be made very shortly.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Prince Rupert may I thank the minister for this Christmas present.

WINTER WORKS**FURTHER REQUEST FOR STATEMENT AS TO CONTINUITY OF PROGRAM**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether he can reply to the question put the day before yesterday about the municipal winter works program.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what is going to happen to this program next year. The cabinet will have to make a decision. I think the program will be revised or abandoned.

[Translation]

INCOME TAX**REQUEST TO INCREASE PERSONAL EXEMPTIONS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gérald Laniel (Beauharnois-Salaberry): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Finance and Receiver General.

Now that the principle of a minimum guaranteed income has been established by Bill No. C-251, does the minister not think that amendments should be made to the Income Tax Act to raise personal exemptions to \$1,260 instead of the present \$1,000, thus treating all Canadians equally?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's question is very general and I really do not think it can be allowed at this time.

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Auguste Choquette (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I will make my question as brief as possible, because my hon. friend from Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Deachman) also has a very urgent question.

I wish to direct my question to the right hon. Prime Minister, and since this is the last day of the session, I would like to offer

him my best wishes and pay tribute to him, on the eve of 1967, as the father of a new Canada.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I should like to remind the hon. member that, particularly on Wednesday, we have only a few minutes at our disposal.

Mr. Choquette: I will be very brief, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Here is the question I have. I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether the government is ready to act upon the recommendation of the consumers credit committee by establishing a department of consumers affairs.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we are giving very careful consideration to the important recommendations of this particular committee, including the one to which my hon. friend has referred.

LABOUR CONDITIONS**BELL ISLAND, NFLD.—REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO UNEMPLOYED MINERS**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I do not know to whom I should direct this question. Perhaps the Minister of Labour will accept it. It has to do with the situation on Bell Island and the difficulties of 8,000 Canadians there, many of whom find themselves in a position verging on destitution as they approach Christmas. This situation has existed for several months. What emergency action is the government going to take? Will it make available something in the nature of a federal subsidy, or what will it do so that the several hundred unemployed there will receive equal consideration with Canadians in other parts of the country?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I think direct action in this particular case would have to be taken by the Department of Manpower and Immigration. I do not know whether my colleague, who is in the house, is in a position to answer the question today. Perhaps he can.

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we are doing in Bell Island what we are doing everywhere in the country; we are trying to help those workers. We are ready to grant them allowances so they may find jobs somewhere else. We have counselling services for