

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Churchill.

* * *

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

DISCUSSIONS WITH PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. During the election campaign the Prime Minister promised that he would, without delay, open a new round of negotiations with the Province of Quebec on equalization. Did the Prime Minister, in his meeting yesterday, start that process?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Hon. Member would agree with me that it would be much more fruitful if he asked that question of the Prime Minister when he returns to the House on Tuesday.

Ms. Copps: Give up your seat!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

ECONOMIC STATEMENT EFFECTS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, much has been made of the fact that Manitoba and Quebec are the provinces that are suffering now with the problem of the equalization formula which the Liberal Government imposed on the country. It is hurting those people. Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell us if the Government, in its effort to consult with and keep provincial Governments informed, will provide the information that the Manitoba Government requested specifically, which was to have the economic effects of the last economic statement provided—

Mr. Speaker: With great respect, I find it difficult to find that question supplementary to the first question.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SOCIAL SECURITYBENEFITS FOR WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS AGED 60 TO 64 YEARS—
EXCLUSION OF SINGLE, DIVORCED AND SEPARATED PERSONS

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare concerning the spouse allowance for widows and widowers.

Could the minister confirm the fact that 80,000 senior citizens between 60 and 64 years of age and in desperate financial need will be denied the benefits of this program simply because they are single, separated or divorced?

[*English*]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, in an earlier answer to the Hon. Member I indicated general patterns regarding the possible legislation for widows and widowers between the ages of 60 and 64. For the exact details, the Hon. Member will have to wait for the legislation to be tabled.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Malépart: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The minister cannot give as an excuse the lack of money, for he is well aware that the government will recover \$20 million in welfare benefits. Does he not think that it would be better to ask the Minister of Finance to spend \$36 million on these people instead of spending it to buy new uniforms for our Armed Forces personnel?

[*English*]

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the Hon. Member that, unlike the previous Government which—

Mr. Nunziata: Hey, put it on fast-forward.

Mr. Epp (Provencher): I would be glad to do so, but you wouldn't even understand that.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Gauthier: That's the fourth time today.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members may find that it is Friday, but I think that it would be appropriate, no matter what the answers to the questions are, if everyone listened with some dignity and courtesy. I think that would be appropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member's question, I would say that the pension reform as well as the paper on the elderly benefits were much better in approaching the matter over a general pattern to see where we best can strengthen not only the elderly benefits package but also look to the future. I hope the Hon. Member would like to join us in that exercise.

* * *

TELEVISION

ADVERTISEMENTS PROMOTING WAR TOYS AND GAMES

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I am sure he knows that in this pre-Christmas period children are being bombarded by television advertising which promotes the sale of war toys, war games, and violence-related products. This comes at a time of high international tension and threat