

sales tax on clothing, in respect of which stores are notified in advance of any inspection?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I stated in the House before, this is carried out by the materials monitoring group of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The indications so far are that the sales tax reduction is being passed on. I am never satisfied, nor are they, and there are continuing inspections and reports which are being accelerated so they will come in more frequently than normal. I am keeping a close eye on the situation.

Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, will the minister indicate to the House when we can expect a full report on the effects to the consumer of the reduction in the sales tax on building materials?

Mr. Danson: Mr. Speaker, I had not anticipated at this point having a full report. I want current reports on a very regular basis so that we can monitor continually. After a reasonable period of time, I would be very happy to report on the net impact of this. As the hon. member can appreciate, the net impact at any given time is difficult to follow. However, by constant monitoring and questioning we are able to isolate those areas where it is being passed on, as well as those areas where it might not be passed on, and that is where we have to concentrate.

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● (1540)

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON MONITORING OF RESULTS OF REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON CLOTHING

Mr. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton Centre): My supplementary question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Will the minister indicate to the House whether or not he has received the results of the national survey mentioned last November on sales tax monitoring?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there were delays in the compilation of the information provided by importers and manufacturers. I hope to have that report by the end of the month.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

REQUEST FOR NAME OF PERSON IN CHARGE OF ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM—SUGGESTED DIFFERENCE OF VIEW BETWEEN MINISTERS ON COLA CLAUSE

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. There seems to be some difference in view between himself and the Minister of Finance about certain aspects of the anti-inflation program. Could he tell us who is in charge of this program of the govern-

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ment, is this program directed by the Prime Minister or is it in the charge of a particular minister?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): The hon. gentleman has tried to point out differences between the Minister of Finance and myself but he has not succeeded. It has been a lamentable failure. I am very happy to have my colleague here to affirm the policy of the government with respect to this and other matters.

In so far as the anti-inflation program is concerned, this is a joint undertaking of several ministers. If it is under any general direction, it is under the direction of the Prime Minister. Of course, my colleague, the Minister of Finance, has a very important part to play because he is one of the most valuable citizens in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: It may not be very reassuring but it at least has been some clarification for the Acting Prime Minister to have expressed some doubt as to whether the program is under any general direction.

I should like to ask the Acting Prime Minister whether there is any way in which he can convince any reasonable person that the statement made by the Minister of Finance with regard to COLA contracts on January 28 bears any resemblance to the interpretation which he tried to place upon it in the House recently.

Mr. Sharp: The hon. gentleman will have noticed that the Minister of Finance has agreed entirely with my interpretation.

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[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

REQUEST FOR INCREASED FUNDS FOR DEPARTMENT

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

Since the agricultural issues have not been dealt with in the budget speech this year, in spite of the continuing difficulties in that basic sector of the Canadian economy, could the minister advise the House whether he intends to require special subsidies to cope immediately with the situation, or whether he will wait for the eventually forthcoming supplementary budget of the Minister of Finance to obtain the money required for appropriate action?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have been successful in getting money for agriculture for any legitimate reason nearly any time I wanted, and I am sure that is a known fact.

[Translation]

SHORTAGE OF HAY—POSSIBILITY OF IMPORTATION FROM UNITED STATES

Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.