

in 1964 by 10 per cent, in 1966 by 15 per cent and again in 1968 by 15 per cent. So our past is a guarantee for the future.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Perhaps the minister did not understand my question. I was asking whether he would be prepared, in view of the large budgetary surplus, to make an interim payment prior to final government decision on the matter? A great many of these veterans are quite likely to die before they get any increase, at the rate things are going now.

**Mr. Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, all of these possibilities are always under consideration and the government of Canada will always stand behind the veterans.

[Translation]

#### FINANCE

##### QUEBEC—STATEMENT OF NEW LIBERAL LEADER RESPECTING REFUND OF \$200 MILLION

**Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister a question relating to a statement by the new leader of the Liberal party of the province of Quebec to the effect that if he is elected premier, he could get back the \$200 million now levied by the federal government for the medicare scheme. Has the prime minister given this assurance to the new Liberal leader of the province of Quebec, and if so, can he tell the House when we can expect this policy to be implemented?

**Mr. Speaker:** I entertain serious doubts as to whether the question of the hon. member is in order.

##### QUEBEC—EFFECTS OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REFUSAL TO REFUND \$200 MILLION

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister.

In view of the serious financial problems now facing Quebec and of the statement made yesterday by the Quebec Minister of Finance to the effect that Quebec would become independent in 1974 if the federal government does not make any concession regarding the \$200 million claimed by Quebec, does not the Prime Minister think

#### *Inquiries of the Ministry*

that he could serve the separatists' cause by refusing to make any concession or offer any alternative solution to Quebec?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I feel that the comment I have just made for the previous question applies also in this case.

[English]

#### POLLUTION

##### CHEDABUCTO BAY—SURVEY OF DAMAGE—PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Fisheries. Has his department undertaken a survey of the potential damage from oil in the Cape Breton area and, if so, has the department arrived at a decision as to how it will approach the question of compensation? Will it be similar to or along the same lines followed in treating the problem in Placentia Bay?

**Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** Mr. Speaker, our officials are working closely with Dr. McTaggart-Cowan and the government task force's approach to this problem. They are endeavouring to assess the damage which has already occurred and which may occur as a result of oil spill from the *Arrow*.

Once the extent of the damage has been determined we will be in a better position to decide on the nature of the compensation.

##### SOUTH COAST OF NEWFOUNDLAND—ACTION TO MINIMIZE EFFECTS

**Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary. Can the Minister of Fisheries say whether any action at all is being taken by the government to minimize the effect of the oil pollution on the south coast of Newfoundland and on the bird population in that area which is being threatened by extinction, according to reports.

**Hon. Jack Davis (Minister of Fisheries and Forestry):** No direct action is being taken at the moment, Mr. Speaker.

#### THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

##### INFLATION—FURTHER POSTPONEMENT OF COPPER PRICE INCREASE

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago as a result of an appeal by the government the producers of