

will be glad to give it to him. However, I have very little time and I would like to finish.

In order to put such a program into effect, a short-term freeze on prices and all forms of income is needed at the outset. This is a period for consultation, for setting the range and limits for the controls period and for putting the necessary monitoring and enforcement agencies into place. It is a preparation and stage-setting period. The freeze period should be as short as possible.

Mr. Trudeau: Except at the farm.

Mr. Stanfield: I always made it clear that we do not include the price at the farm.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: I am glad to find members opposite are now listening to us. Perhaps they will now look at what we have been saying. We have talked about 90 days because we feel that must be the maximum time taken in this preparatory stage.

Mr. Trudeau: Except at the farm.

Mr. Stanfield: We would certainly want to see it as short as 30 days if that could be done, but we have used 90 days as an outside figure, one which we believe could be fulfilled.

Mr. Trudeau: Except on food prices.

Mr. Stanfield: Except, as I have always said, food at the farm gate. The Prime Minister would know that if he paid attention to what I say. I am on a strictly limited time. I wish to emphasize that we have never put our position forward as any kind of a magic wand, any more than the international monetary fund put it forward as a magic wand. We have never said it would completely halt inflation and we have never denied the international aspects of the problem. We simply say that a comprehensive program is the fairest, would command support and would do better in the long run than ad hoc policies of relief patched onto a traditional approach of tight money and economic slowdown.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Our program envisages, and indeed presumes, judiciously balanced monetary and fiscal policies. It presumes exemplary self-restraint on the part of the government and governments generally in relation to their own spending and aggrandizement.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): How about the \$4 billion deficit?

Mr. Stanfield: It is nice to see the Minister of Finance awake. I hope he is going to defend his budget today because he presented it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Our approach presumes additional measures to increase the supply and availability of goods and services that are in tight demand.

Mr. Trudeau: Like we have done.

Cost of Living

Mr. Stanfield: No, Mr. Speaker, not like they have done.

Mr. Trudeau: Let's hear about it.

Mr. Stanfield: It presumes other actions to take the heat off wage and salary earners, particularly those on low income, so they can escape the vicious circle of trying to keep up with inflation. Steps to take this heat off have always included my plan for the indexing of the personal income tax system, a plan that will be proclaimed into law any day now, thanks to the conversion of the Minister of Finance following a not too successful election campaign.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: In the same vein, removal of the 11 per cent federal sales tax on building materials would take some of the edge off the soaring cost of housing. Removal of the federal sales tax from all clothing, not just children's clothing, would also be a positive contribution to easing the inflationary pressures bearing down on wage and salary earners. A comprehensive initiative of this nature would go a long way toward cooling off the inflationary psychology that is on the rise in this country today.

Our plan does not require a massive new bureaucracy. Surely, most of the talents and resources that would be needed are already present in the federal public service. There is the Department of National Revenue and its local administrative and auditing staff, the Department of Agriculture's resources and experts, the skills and expertise within the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, at least I assume they are there, and the analysis and computers in the Department of Finance. All that is missing is the will and determination to marshal these talents and resources in order to deal with this matter of very urgent and pressing necessity.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: What the government offered through the Prime Minister's announcement last week was not a policy. It is a mutation of obsolete and discredited approaches to inflation, a mutation based on expediency and survival. It is a tactic, not a policy. It is a ruse rather than a plan. Therefore, since my time is up, I take pleasure in moving:

That this House has no confidence in the adequacy of government measures to deal with the cost of living as such measures were announced to the House by the Prime Minister on September 4, 1973.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) he should not have felt constrained by time. Because of the importance of the subject matter, he was entitled to all the time he could muster in the House. If he ran out of energy and impetus, I can understand it, but the House would certainly have been willing to let him continue.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!