

Inquiries of the Ministry

very comprehensive survey that includes both the social and municipal implications of the removal of the subsidy. We hope that we shall have a government decision as to the future of the gold mines and the gold mining communities and the relevance of the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act in a very short time.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

INFLATION—SUGGESTED MEETING OF
PRIME MINISTER AND
LABOUR LEADERS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

An hon. Member: He will not listen.

Mr. Hees: I gave him notice of the question. Following the Prime Minister's suggestion yesterday that I invite the country's top labour leaders to a private meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss some of the country's more serious economic problems and possible solutions to them, and in view of the personal assurances that have been given to me during the past 24 hours by those top labour leaders that they would welcome such a meeting and that they think it could be very constructive indeed, will the Prime Minister assure the House that he will now instruct his staff to work out a mutually convenient time for holding such meetings, so that they can be proceeded with as soon as possible?

An hon. Member: How about next weekend?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there may be a little bit of misunderstanding on the question of how the hon. member's persuasive powers were to be used. When I answered his question yesterday I suggested that since in my public meetings with the labour leaders some months ago I had not been entirely successful, perhaps the hon. member could invite the labour leaders and that he could convince them. Obviously, he feels he is unable to convince them and he wants me to convince them.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: I am, of course, prepared to do so and I thank the hon. member for his constructive proposal. But I have a high regard for the persuasive powers of the Minister of Labour, who has told me that he has been in contact with the labour leaders for

some time now and that he will arrange for such meetings if such meetings can usefully take place.

Mr. Hees: I have conveyed to the Prime Minister, as he very well knows, the fact that during the past 24 hours very senior labour leaders of this country have indicated that a private meeting with the Prime Minister would be very conducive to improvements in the economic atmosphere in Canada. Will the Prime Minister take this matter seriously in the interest of the country? I am speaking very seriously. Will he ask these labour leaders to attend a private meeting with him, away from press, radio and television? Possibly a meeting could be held in the home of the Prime Minister to discuss these important matters.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has asked his question.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I assure the hon. member that I do take the proposal seriously. I thank the hon. member for having given it consideration and for having discussed it with me yesterday after the question period. I can only repeat my answer of yesterday to him and indicate that steps are under way. The Minister of Labour has been having discussions with these leaders. If the minister cannot make any headway, and if the labour leaders find that their only access to me is through the hon. member, I will willingly let him set up the meeting.

INFLATION—EFFECT OF HIGHER WAGE
INCREASE IN TOWBOAT INDUSTRY ON
SIX PER CENT GUIDELINE

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): A supplementary question. Following the announcement made by the Minister of Labour yesterday, I ask the Prime Minister whether the government's guideline on wage and salary increases is still 6 per cent?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): If the Leader of the Opposition will recall, the government's position as stated by the Minister of Finance is that the Chairman of the Prices and Incomes Commission proposed that guideline to the federal government and to the provinces. We indicated our intention of accepting it.

Mr. Stanfield: A further supplementary. Will the Prime Minister or one of his ministers make a statement on motions at an early date to explain this guideline? Since the gov-