

Oral Questions

budgets, that Canadians let their actions be guided by what is said in the budget at the time of its presentation rather than by speculation about it.

Mr. MacGuigan: Mr. Speaker, will the Prime Minister at least assure the House that if profiteering occurs on the part of service stations in parts of the country today, an investigation will subsequently be conducted?

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, that is a very hypothetical question. I have indicated already to the first questioner who raised the matter in the House today that we have been looking into the question as to whether the traditional protections against budget leaking have been put in place. They have been put in place, and to our understanding they have been respected.

Mr. Speaker: On a supplementary, the hon. member for Windsor West.

Mr. Gray: Mr. Speaker, my question is not supplementary.

* * *

ORGANIZED LABOUR

NOVA SCOTIA—ALLEGED CONTRAVENTION OF ILO CONVENTION

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that the government of Nova Scotia has introduced the infamous Michelin bill, which in effect indicates that all workers in interdependent plants must be organized by the same union and at the same time, that this legislation is contrary to convention 87 of the ILO, of which Canada is a signatory, as well as contravening all labour legislation in this country, including the federal Labour Code, could the minister tell the House what his reaction is to this sort of legislation and whether he intends to use this as a model for future changes in the Canada Labour Code?

● (1420)

Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. member would not want me to make a comment on something that is purely within provincial jurisdiction—and there is no question about that. I think what the hon. member has referred to is broader-based bargaining. As the hon. member may recall, a report was handed down in the past year or so, the Bairstow report, that indicates this is a matter that should be under intensive study by the federal government.

I can assure the hon. member that this matter, in terms of wider-based bargaining, is under intensive study but we certainly do not intend to take any leadership from any province. In short, I know the hon. member was just playing jokes when he asked me to make a comment on a subject that is purely within provincial jurisdiction.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that ILO convention 87 was signed by Canada, not the province of Nova

[Mr. Clark.]

Scotia, in view of the fact that the federal government is involved with the Michelin Tire Company in that it has given considerable amounts in DREE grants, in duty-free concessions and in accelerated depreciation on capital costs to Michelin company, and in view of the fact that this same company has an application for more of the same from this government, can the Prime Minister assure the House that he will not sign any agreements with the company which is so obviously flying in the face of civilized labour legislation, not only in Canada but in the world?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in his enthusiasm the hon. member has, I am sure, noted that jurisdiction for signing international agreements rests with the federal government; but, as the Minister of Labour indicated, the jurisdiction in this particular matter in dispute rests with the provincial government.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Prime Minister a specific question and I repeat it because I did not get an answer the first time. In view of the fact that the federal government has been very generous with Michelin Tire Company in the past, vis-à-vis DREE grants and all sorts of other concessions, in view of the fact that this company now has an application before this government for more grants of the same kind, and in view of the fact that what is being perpetrated in Nova Scotia is a blot against the escutcheon of Canada in respect of labour relations, I want to ask the Prime Minister whether he will use that leverage to get some concessions from the company in respect of the signing-up of workers outside the interdependent plants.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, many of us wonder what kind of Draconian regime might be brought in by the New Democratic Party were it to form a government.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: Speaking for this government, I can give the unconditional assurance to the hon. member that we will not deny federal aid or assistance to Canadian individuals, Canadian trade unions or Canadian companies simply because they might be involved in disputes within provincial jurisdictions.

Mr. Rodriguez: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Windsor West.

* * *

LABOUR CONDITIONS

INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYED—GOVERNMENT CONCERN

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister, in the absence of the Minister