

Oral Questions

Again, I come back to the question here, which way is the New Democratic Party going? Does it want to have a Canadian company buy Dome? Does it want to have no support go to that Canadian company? Or does it want to nationalize Dome Petroleum? Which is it? Come clean. Let us know. We would like to know where the NDP stands on this issue.

• (1440)

REQUEST THAT DECISION NOT BE MADE BY BUREAUCRATS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, let me make it clear to the Minister that we want the resources to be developed by a Canadian company and that we want accountability. I know of no way in which I could make our policy more clear to the Minister.

Will the Minister not give us the assurance that a decision of such magnitude on public revenue will be made by elected officials in Cabinet rather than by bureaucrats in the Department of Revenue? Surely he appreciates the significance of this, and the difference between regular decisions made by Revenue Canada and one which has such magnitude of importance to the public interest. Surely he recognizes the difference.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is asking hypothetical questions. As I indicated in my previous response, the Department of Finance does not make tax rulings. Those are made by officials in the Department of National Revenue because they are clarifications of the Income Tax Act as it stands. The ruling is to clarify the tax law, and that happens on a regular basis.

If the Hon. Member stops to think about what he is saying he will realize that his suggestion would result in this Parliament being totally swamped with tax rulings, day in and day out.

Mr. Broadbent: What's \$2.5 billion?

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

CANADA-MANITOBA NORTHERN FLOOD AGREEMENT

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and is with regard to the failure of the Government so far to implement the Canada-Manitoba Northern Flood Agreement. There are five northern Manitoba Indian bands which are awaiting fresh, clean drinking water, and the appropriate and necessary sewage disposal systems.

When will the foot-dragging come to an end? When will the Government of Canada honour its obligations under the Canada-Manitoba Northern Flood Agreement?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member is aware that discussions are taking place between counsel for the bands flooded in northern Manitoba and officials in the Department of Northern Affairs and Indian Development. Those discussions will continue.

As the Hon. Member is aware, there has been a commitment made that potable drinking water will be provided to the reserves in this fiscal year under the fiscal framework within which we have to work. We are having discussions on how it can be put in place. In addition, as the Hon. Member is fully aware, there are some areas involved in northern Manitoba where the provision of infrastructures such as sewage lines is well nigh impossible because of the places where the villages are built.

MINISTER'S LETTER TO NORTHERN FLOOD COMMITTEE
PRESIDENT

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, on December 22, 1986, the Minister wrote to Chief Rodney Spence, President of the Northern Flood Committee. In that letter he promised "to accelerate the implementation of the water and sewer systems within the five communities".

Will the Minister explain to the House why his foot is on the brake rather than on the accelerator?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I find it strange that the member who has a concern in these matters, which I and all Members of the House recognize and share, does not recognize that he was part of a Government which implemented agreements without any plan, without identification of dollars, and without—

Mr. Penner: It's \$57 million.

Mr. McKnight: The Hon. Member is saying it is only \$7 million.

Mr. Penner: It is \$57 million.

Mr. McKnight: Okay, \$57 million.

Mr. Penner: Where is it?

Mr. McKnight: Now he is saying, "Where is it?" We have had discussions. An agreement was drafted and signed by the Government which he represented which did not provide for implementation. These discussions are provided for in the agreement. That is what the negotiations are about, Mr. Speaker.