

Oral Questions

Will the minister announce today a moratorium on the deportation of these women refugees and make a commitment to re-examine all of these cases under the new guidelines?

• (1450)

[English]

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we have already indicated that all the cases that come before the IRB are now subjected to the guidelines that Madam Mawani announced in March. Every case before the final review before deportation made at national headquarters encompasses a review under those guidelines.

The hon. member should thank this government and congratulate us on having updated the guidelines in order to give protection to these people. Indeed all those cases are reviewed in light of those guidelines.

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[Translation]

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In its federal budget of last week, the government announced that it would not renew the agreement on economic and regional development in minerals.

Can the Minister tell us today whether the Canada-Quebec Mineral Development Agreement, which was signed in December 1992 and represents costs of \$100 million, will be maintained until 1998 in Quebec?

Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I want to reassure my colleague that, indeed, this agreement will be maintained while complying of course with the budget cuts which were announced.

I also want to remind the hon. member that with the Whitehorse initiative, the federal government, the provinces, the company, the workers and all the other stakeholders in the mining industry are presently working to make this sector more competitive again, and this is precisely what we will continue to do in coming years.

FORESTRY

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy—Royal): Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the start of National Forestry Week which is sponsored by the federal Department of Forestry.

The purpose is to increase awareness of the importance of forestry to Canada. I participated in the signing of an agreement for the Fundy forest model just last week in my constituency.

I know that many of us are aware of how important the health of our forests are to our tourism sector, our environment and our economy. Our forest sector annually sells \$20 billion in exports and supports the economies of hundreds of communities. Yet in last week's budget we learned that the government has decided not to renew the federal-provincial forestry development agreements which have been operating in every province and every territory.

My question is for the Minister of Forestry. Is this an indication that the federal government is withdrawing from forestry? Does the government plan to honour its obligation as part of this government's agenda for sustainable development?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, my colleague points to the fact that fiscal realities have forced us to plan a phase-out of the forest resource development agreements over the next four years.

Fortunately most of the objectives that were assigned to these agreements have been met. In fact the volume of our operating forests has increased by 15 per cent over the last 10 years. The area that has been properly regenerated is twice the area harvested. This now permits the federal government to pursue new priorities such as the ones that we have assigned to the model forest program and to our international obligations.

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PEACEKEEPING

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.