

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

[Later:]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I would like at this stage to thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) who, I think, spoke on behalf of all hon. members when he welcomed me upon my return here from the hospital. I can tell him that the operation was a complete success and that within a few months I will be able to carry out my duties as before.

[English]

I should also like to thank all hon. members who sent me notes while I was in the hospital, and assure them that they helped a lot in bringing me back here so quickly after my operation.

[Translation]

[Later:]

If I risked my life in that operation, Mr. Speaker, it is because it was not my intention to lead the life of a disabled man, but rather to be in better shape still to discharge my duties.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[English]

EDUCATION

ABSORPTION OF NEW UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance which arises from surveys showing that the recruiting effort by business and government has been substantially reduced on university campuses. It is estimated that 88,000 persons will graduate from universities this year, which is a record. Bearing that in mind, may I ask the minister if he will make a statement on motions in the near future to reassure the country that the economy will be able to absorb these new graduates, as well as to indicate what policies the government will follow and what programs it is prepared to undertake to ensure we do not lose to the United States or some other country a high proportion of this year's expected 88,000 graduates.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the Leader of the Opposition is asking the Minister of Finance to make a very general statement of a type which ought to be made on

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motions. But if hon. members think the question ought to be answered, and there is agreement for that, perhaps the minister might be allowed to do so.

Mr. Stanfield: I apologize if my question is not clear. I meant to ask the minister if he would make a statement on motions at an early date.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as always I shall be very pleased to consider my hon. friend's suggestion.

Mr. Stanfield: May I ask whether the specific question of the problem of finding employment for and using the talents of this large graduating class emerging from our universities this year is now before the cabinet in specific form?

Mr. Benson: Mr. Speaker, I of course cannot say what is and what is not before the cabinet. However, speaking without having read the report that my hon. friend has mentioned, I believe that Canada will be able to absorb all the good young people whom our universities can produce in the future.

POLLUTION

REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION DEALING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of a recent, major accident on the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway which was alleged to have taken place in major part because of air pollution, and in view of the report this morning that the International Joint Commission is concerned with the pollution of the St. Mary's River by two large Canadian corporations, will the minister inform the house whether legislation will be brought down this session to deal with environmental pollution, and standards for clean air and clean water?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member that this whole matter of air pollution was discussed at the last federal conference of health ministers. At that time we undertook to try to arrive at standards and criteria this year and, in consultation with the provinces, see if they can be applied across the country in a uniform way.