

Oral Questions

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I happen to believe the minister of HRD. I also happen to believe the chief actuary because their opinions are the same.

The chief actuary did say that if action were not taken on the Canada pension plan that major financial problems would ensue. The minister of HRD has made it very clear that the government intends to take such action. Meetings have already been held with the officials. There will be meetings with provincial finance ministers. That is where the changes have to take place.

I look forward to hearing the Reform Party's suggestions. I hope they are a little bit better than the budget it came out with last year. However it is something we work on with the provinces. The minister of HRD and I will be doing that together.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY CANADA

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. On September 22 the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs stated in this House that his government was not carrying out any studies on overlap, just analyses. A fine distinction. The secret Industry Canada document confirms the existence of factual analyses on overlap, and I quote: For further details on duplication and overlap, refer to analyses.

Now that we have confirmation that such analyses on duplication and overlap do exist, does the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs plan to make them public before the referendum?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I shall repeat my position, because it is true; the unity group within my Department has carried out no analysis whatsoever on duplication and overlap, and has carried out no study whatsoever on duplication and overlap.

We do have a process to reduce and eliminate duplication and overlap, and this has led to the signature of a number of action plans by the first ministers. So, that is a process which does exist. I greatly regret that the present Parti Québécois government has refused to help us eliminate duplication. But the truth is: no studies of that type have been carried out for us.

• (1500)

[English]

SAUGEEN FIRST NATION

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the chief of the Saugeen First Nation signed a declaration claiming authority over 300 kilometres of shoreline up to 11 kilometres out into the water around Bruce Peninsula.

Chief Kahgee claimed sovereign status under international law. The chief said he will start today to implement fishing season quotas, issue commercial and sports licences, and analyse resources. The department of Indian affairs has known about this for over three years.

Can the minister tell the House his plans to prevent this subversion of the legitimate authority of the Government of Canada?

Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if a claim has been issued it has not come to my desk. Anyone can issue a claim in Canada. If it is by writ, it winds up with the Minister of Justice. If it is a claim, the member knows there is a process, and if it is a legitimate grievance then it is negotiated.

In 1993 in the Nadjiwon case the Ontario provincial court found that the Saugeen Ojibway have a right of access to and use of their traditional fishing ground around the Bruce Peninsula. The provincial court did not find a right of ownership. If there is an issue there, I am sure in due course it will be decided by a court.

I think the hon. member is doing a disservice to a court system and a claim system we have in Canada that provides for due process and not political brownie points.

The Speaker: This will bring to close the question period.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I wish to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Royal Highness Prince Saud Al-Faisal Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Notwithstanding Standing Order 31 a little earlier, some 16 months ago I started an initiative to recognize our distinguished citizens in Canada. To that end, I have invited some men who have in part given us our identity as a nation. There are very few of us in the Chamber who have not at one time wished that we could put on these people's shoes and do what they do. They are among our most talented Canadians.

An hon. member: Skates.