

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

Minister of Finance. In light of the very serious contentions of the Canadian Bar Association in its brief to the finance committee yesterday on the white paper proposals, particularly with regard to their assessment of the proposals dealing with mining companies, would the minister consider publishing the background papers which led the government to the conclusions expressed in the proposals so that the reasoning as well as the conclusions could be assessed?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that later I will be appearing before that committee, together with officials of my department, and we would be most pleased to explain our reasoning at that time as we have previously.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, this concerns not so much the members of the committee as it does the members of the public who are making very elaborate and considered assessments of the white paper proposals. Witness after witness comes forward and says it is impossible to judge the conclusions because they do not know what the reasoning is upon which the government has based its proposals.

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Speaker, the reasoning has been often expressed publicly. I am very pleased that the white paper process is working so well and that the committee is receiving such good briefs.

WHITE PAPER ON REFORM—DRAFTING  
OF LEGISLATION

**Mr. A. D. Hales (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. Has he issued instructions to the Department of Justice to draft legislation substantially in line with the proposals of the white paper?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** No, Mr. Speaker.

TRADE

DIVERSION FROM CANADIAN TO AMERICAN  
PLANTS BY PROPOSED U.S. TAX  
INCENTIVES

**Mr. Max Saltzman (Waterloo):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Finance. Is the government studying the United States government's proposed tax incentives to United States corporations, the purpose of which would be to divert trade

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

away from plants in Canada to those operating in the United States? If he is conducting such a study, does he intend to make representations to the United States government voicing the objections of the Canadian government?

**Mr. Benson:** Yes, to both questions, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Saltzman:** Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate to what extent these moves of the United States government are in retaliation against the government's white paper on tax reform?

**Mr. Benson:** Not at all, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

FINANCE

MERGER OF LA BANQUE POPULAIRE AND  
BANQUE PROVINCIALE DU CANADA

**Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Minister of Finance.

Could he say whether he has been consulted in connection with the merger of the Provincial Bank of Canada and the Banque populaire du Québec and whether the move has been approved by the government under the Bank Act?

[English]

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Yes, Mr. Speaker; I announced it in the House some time ago.

POLLUTION

LAKE ERIE—STEPS TO ACHIEVE CO-ORDINATION  
OF AUTHORITIES IN DEALING WITH  
OIL SPILLS

**Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich):** In light of the report of the International Joint Commission on oil pollution tabled yesterday and the commissioners' warning that a major oil spill in the Canadian waters of Lake Erie "would be met with only a fraction of the response capabilities available because of the lack of a plan for co-ordination between Canadian federal, provincial and local authorities", would the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources please indicate what steps are being taken or what steps are contemplated to achieve this necessary co-ordination?

**Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** An effective plan at