

Oral Questions

● (1440)

[Translation]

FINANCE

ACCURACY OF FIGURES PUBLISHED IN QUEBEC ON
FEDERAL PAYMENTS TO PROVINCE

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Minister of Finance.

Can he confirm or refute, as the case may be, the accuracy of the figures published during the last Quebec election campaign relative to the money collected and spent by the federal government in Quebec, between 1946 and 1971?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will understand that his question is faulty on two points. The first is obvious, for he asks the minister to confirm or refute a statement made outside the House. The second weakness I see is that the question could well be put on the order paper.

Mr. Matte: Mr. Speaker, if I may be permitted to put a direct question to the Minister of Finance.

Have officials of his department received requests from the province of Quebec to clarify the statement of expenses and revenues collected in the province of Quebec, between 1946 and 1971?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

EFFECT OF INCREASE IN PERSONAL INCOME SPENT ON
OIL AND GAS ON SPENDING IN OTHER AREAS

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to one asked by the hon. member for Don Valley. With regard to the minister's statement concerning economic expansion, does the minister anticipate that the increased percentage of personal income spent on oil and gas will result in a decline in spending in other areas of the economy, and will this decline in spending reduce the rate of economic expansion and be responsible for greater unemployment?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the conclusion implicit in the hon. gentleman's question follows from his own preamble.

Mr. Alexander: Can the minister inform the House as to what the effect of the price increases for energy products will be on the projected growth of the gross national product? Can the minister answer that question?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I think the House will be in a better decision to assess this for itself after the statement tomorrow by my colleague.

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

ENERGY

DISCUSSION WITH QUEBEC AND MARITIME PROVINCES
ON MEASURES TO OFFSET INCREASES IN PRICE OF
VENEZUELAN CRUDE OIL

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is addressed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Has the minister had discussions with the governments of Quebec and of the four Atlantic provinces with a view to taking measures to offset increases in the price of Venezuelan crude coming into Canada, which of course will have the effect of increasing the consumer price of fuel and gasoline products in those provinces?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have had discussions with some of the governments but not with all. I think I will have to defer further answers on that until tomorrow.

OIL—CONSULTATION WITH QUEBEC GOVERNMENT ON
NEED FOR ST. LAWRENCE SUPERPORTS

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the present policy of the government to replace foreign oil in eastern Canada with Canadian oil, can the minister advise the House whether there has been consultation between the federal government and the Quebec government to determine whether, in view of the new policy, there is still a need for the proposed oil superports on the St. Lawrence?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, that was the nature of my meeting with two Quebec ministers in September.

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AGRICULTURE

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF
EMBARGO ON IMPORT OF FAT CATTLE FROM UNITED
STATES

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether, in view of the deep uncertainty among cattle producers, as evidenced by the discussions at the cattlemen's convention now going on in the city of Regina, the government has decided to apply an embargo or very stern restrictive quotas on the importation of U.S. fat cattle into Canada?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): No, Mr. Speaker. The problem is still under discussion.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, it has been under discussion for some time. During the past week more cattle were brought in from the United States than have been brought in for many, many years. I think the number was in excess of 20,000. As 50 per cent of the kill in Canada is of American cattle, when is it expected that a decision will be made? The cattlemen are waiting for action instead of procrastination.