

*Oral Questions*

requires offshore drilling to meet energy needs. Although B.C.'s offshore area is subject to aboriginal claims, the panel is specifically prohibited from dealing with aboriginal rights. B.C. Indians are justifiably worried that, while land claims are being stalled, their resources are being ripped off and their environment destroyed.

Petro-Canada, which possess offshore leases, has shown the farcical nature of the panel by declining even to take part. It claims the cost of providing information is too high. Finally, no funding has been provided for intervenors. Communities which would be devastated by any offshore drilling accident do not have the funds to make full and adequate study of the risks involved.

This farcical panel was appointed by the previous Government. I call on the present Government not to lift the moratorium on offshore drilling until a proper study has been done. Intervenor funding must be provided, aboriginal rights must be considered, and the question of energy need must be raised.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### ENERGY

#### NEWFOUNDLAND OFFSHORE DEVELOPMENT— FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL AGREEMENT

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. It appears that the federal Government has made a contract, or deal, with the Province of Newfoundland concerning the offshore. On June 14 the Prime Minister, when he was Leader of the Opposition, wrote to Premier Peckford outlining the proposals of his Party for an offshore deal. Does the agreement, negotiated and apparently concluded with Newfoundland, reflect the provisions of that letter to Premier Peckford, and would he arrange that his Minister table the agreement in the House as soon as possible so the people of Newfoundland and the rest of Canada can review the terms?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** I thank my right hon. friend for raising a very important issue, Mr. Speaker. In point of fact the matter has not yet been fully concluded. Under the direction of the Minister of Energy the talks have progressed extremely well. There is a meeting of minds and agreement in principle in some very major areas—almost all, I understand. There appear to be some housekeeping items and some tightening up to do, and we expect that at an early moment there will be a final agreement because such an agreement would be very much in the interests of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Canada.

#### ELIMINATION OF BACK-IN PROVISIONS IN NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in that same letter the Prime Minister, when he was Leader of the Opposition, assured Premier Peckford that the Crown-carried share in offshore Newfoundland and Labrador would be equally shared by both Governments. In light of his statement in New York city earlier in the week, where he proposed the elimination of the back-in provisions of the National Energy Program, how is the Province of Newfoundland going to be compensated?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I think it will be compensated financially, with money and with new opportunities, when the negotiations are completed. What has happened so far appears to be fully consistent with the agreement I worked out with Premier Peckford in June, and not at all inconsistent with the thrust of the statement I made in New York and which I made elsewhere in the country.

I want to assure my right hon. friend, and other Members of the House, because I know we all regard this as very important, that when the deal is concluded in its final form and brought to the House for approval, he will be satisfied that indeed this is an extremely worth-while and long-awaited agreement very much in the interests of the development of Newfoundland. It will open new opportunities to Newfoundlanders and other Canadians, as well as broaden our energy perspectives around the world.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Of course we hope that is true.

#### EQUALIZATION PAYMENTS

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in that same letter to Premier Peckford the right hon. gentleman assured the people of Newfoundland that there would be no dollar for dollar loss in equalization payments as a result of revenues flowing from the offshore. In light of the Prime Minister's current conversations with the Premier of Manitoba and with Premier Lévesque of Quebec relating to equalization payments, can he guarantee to the people of Newfoundland that there will be no loss in equalization payments?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have always felt the concept of federalism is sharing, sharing wealth and opportunity. Newfoundland has been a deprived province for too long and this Government, hopefully with the concurrence of all Members of the House, will take some very definite and positive steps to ensure that the people of Newfoundland and Labrador finally get a fair kick at the can here in Canada.