

*Oral Questions***NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION**PROPOSED INQUIRY INTO OPERATIONS OF COMMISSION—
REPORT OF TASK FORCE ON COST OVER-RUNS ON AISHAK AND
STRUTT LAKE PROJECTS

Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, these rates which were announced yesterday by the NCPC were given notice of one year ago. What is being done at the present time is that the rates have been referred to the AIB for examination and also within our department the former minister set up a task force to examine them to see what sort of relief might be given. I expect to get their report next week.

Mr. Clark: A supplementary question. I should like, first of all, to have a guarantee from the minister that once the task force reports, its recommendations will be made available to the House of Commons forthwith and not hidden, as has happened with so many reports made available to this government. I should like also to ask the minister whether, in light of the recurrent problems involved in NCPC and the recurrent unfairness to the people of the north, the government will consider making changes in the legislation regarding the NCPC, in particular whether they will amend section 10 of the act which requires a self-sustaining capacity for NCPC?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, in examining the task force report, which I hope to get next week, that suggestion will be examined as well.

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ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAMREQUEST FOR ACTION TO STOP PRICE INCREASES IMPOSED ON
RESIDENTS OF NORTHERN CANADA

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): A final supplementary for the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. We understand from the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development that there has been a reference of this matter to the Anti-Inflation Board. That simply draws attention to the inconsistency of the government's approach whereby on the one hand they have been using the Anti-Inflation Board to restrict increases in wages of people in northern Canada while through another agency they are pushing through the system and imposing upon consumers in that region extravagant power rate increases. Will the Prime Minister give the House a guarantee now that action will be taken by his government to change that situation, where unfair increases are imposed upon consumers in northern Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to the AIB action as regards wages but seems to neglect the fact that they also act on prices and that the Consumer Price Index is considerably lower—almost half the rate it was last year.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMYUNEMPLOYMENT—EFFECT OF JOB CREATION PROGRAM
DURING FIRST HALF OF 1977

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Tables were delivered to me this morning which were produced by the minister's department. They show that during the first half of 1977 his officials anticipate unemployment will average 7.5 per cent and that during the same period they anticipate a significant drop in the number of jobs created. I just passed a copy of the table over to the minister. Given this information would the minister not agree that the paltry program of his colleague the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, which will not even come into operation until April 1, 1977, will not alleviate—could we have order please? I know you have just discovered unemployment. Would you listen?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

● (1420)

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, would the minister not agree that the program brought in, as announced by his colleague, will not affect the unemployment situation during the first six months of 1977?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. gentleman refers to as a paltry sum