

Oral Questions

Quebec, or a province taking a similar position, will be following? It seems to me that both the committee and the House are entitled to have this information before the government proceeds.

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. gentleman will not try to misrepresent the situation. We have put before the House a legislative proposal which enables the provinces to make a choice whether they come in or stay out. Some provinces have made that choice and made their announcements. It would not be our intention to make their announcements for them. Those provincial governments will have to indicate what their position will be, and presumably they will want to indicate it to their legislatures.

As to whether a province will come forward and announce this by the time—I hope a matter of a very few weeks—the bill receives royal assent, I cannot be sure. I cannot be sure if the remaining provinces will take a position and announce it. I think it would be desirable for themselves and for the program to do so but, after all, that is a matter of provincial decision making. We have gone back to them with this option. We have provided them with the full background. We hope they will soon make that decision.

As to the guidelines that a particular province will follow, we have had the assurance from Quebec that they will be closely paralleling the federal program. I invite the hon. gentleman to examine Bill 64 and to compare it with Bill C-73. Inevitably this will happen where a separate tribunal considers these matters, but the application will have to be decided by the tribunal to be created in Quebec in accordance with the judgment of those involved. I cannot give the hon. member the assurance that everything that the Quebec tribunal does will be exactly identical to what the federal tribunal will do. I think that surely speaks for itself.

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POST OFFICE

INQUIRY WHETHER UNION MEMBERSHIP COMPULSORY—
REQUEST THAT RIGHTS OF NON-UNION CASUAL EMPLOYEES
BE PROTECTED

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Postmaster General. It has been brought to my attention that postal union members returning to work are being threatened with expulsion by their union. My question is: Is it compulsory to be a member of the union to work in the post office?

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, this is not an isolated incident; it has been happening in Vancouver, Moncton, Hamilton and other places. It is not necessary to be a member of a union. If the union suspends a worker, then within the collective agreement there is what is known as the Rand formula, which permits a non-union worker to get all of the benefits of working in the post office, job security and all the rest of it, providing equipment and union dues are deducted and paid over to the union in accordance with the Rand formula.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

Mr. Alkenbrack: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Postmaster General see that the rights of casual non-union employees are maintained in this dispute?

Mr. Mackasey: Mr. Speaker, this is a little different question concerning casuals who are not members of the union. Casuals were always used to provide service when there was a high volume of mail. This right has not been eroded. Management has maintained that particular right, even though it has spelt out certain situations that limit the use of casuals.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, may I express satisfaction at the fact that the hon. member for Brandon-Souris, who underwent very serious surgery yesterday of a cardiac nature, has recovered, and I think I speak for both Houses when I wish him God speed.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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● (1130)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF CANADA'S
CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs I have a question for the government House leader. Will the government agree to an order of reference by this House to the Standing Committee on External Affairs, that the committee immediately begin hearings to review the future prospects of the United Nations and Canada's present and future participation in that organization, in light of the adoption in the United Nations of the despicable resolution which was unanimously condemned by this House in a motion it agreed to earlier this week?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Secretary of State for External Affairs I will give this suggestion consideration.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF STATEMENTS ON EMISSION
STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO SYNCRUDE

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment, and it again concerns the Syncrude project. Yesterday in the House in answer to one of my questions the minister said that this problem in respect of emissions is mainly a problem for Alberta, and therefore we do not have national guidelines or standards relating to that specific type of industry. The minister then went on to say that any such activities should themselves fall well within the standards established by the Department of the Environment. I am wondering if the minister would like now to clear up that somewhat lethal fog she left over the House following those questions yesterday?