

## REQUEST THAT ISSUE BE DEBATED IN PARLIAMENT

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a final question to the Deputy Prime Minister, if he can speak on behalf of the Prime Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister knows that this type of ruling is a purely discretionary decision. It does not flow from the Income Tax Act. He also knows that the Prime Minister claims to have made the final decision in the Gulf matter.

Will the Prime Minister have the final say on whether or not a tax ruling will be issued in favour of Dome Petroleum or a purchaser of Dome Petroleum? Will he undertake—I do not want to interrupt the hurried consultations on the front bench—

**Mr. Mazankowski:** That is a silly question.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** “A silly question”, the Deputy Prime Minister says. It is a silly question involving thousands of jobs and Canadian ownership of our oil and gas industry! Oh, a silly question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gauthier:** That was a silly comment.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I think the Deputy Prime Minister needs the next 10 days to reflect on that particular interjection. Will he give an undertaking that before that discretionary decision is made by the Prime Minister and his Government he will bring the issue before Parliament, because the Canadian taxpayer has a right to know what has happened?

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, if the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition would permit me, I would say to him that he knows that this kind of a ruling is made according to well established processes. A taxpayer who wishes a ruling communicates with our Department, to the Deputy Minister or to the proper official. They seek to bring themselves within the income tax law. They set out the kind of proposition they have. We have the resources of the Department of Justice who assist in this very—

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** And the Department of Finance.

**Mr. MacKay:** We have the resources within the section in our Department as the Opposition Leader knows, having been Minister of Finance, to make a proper decision based on the law and in an arm's length fashion. He knows the way this thing works.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** That is why I am asking.

*Oral Questions*

## GOVERNMENT POLICY QUERY

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Yesterday the Minister of Energy said that when an offer is made to Dome Petroleum it will be considered by the Government in accordance with policies in place at the time. Policies, Mr. Speaker. What policies? The next policy of this Government on Dome Petroleum will be its first.

Why is the Government refusing to consider the problems and the choices affecting Dome Petroleum? They could have a devastating effect on 4,000 jobs in this country directly and probably another 20,000 jobs indirectly.

● (1425)

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Hon. Member if he spoke out in the same way some five years ago in October, 1980.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** That is when the decision was made by the previous Government to put Dome in the position it is in today.

**Mr. Rossi:** You're skating around. You're trying to fool the Canadian people.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** The Hon. Member does not like the truth. He is very sensitive about this because he knows full well that the position Dome Petroleum is in today started right there on October 29, 1980.

**Mr. Rossi:** He's skating around and he knows it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** I know Hon. Members are aware that when we get into an unsolicited exchange it is taking away time from Hon. Members who are here to ask questions.

## MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Minister of Finance that a Liberal Government would not back away from this problem and would not try to wash its hands of this very serious situation.

Why is the Government trying to have us believe that Canadians do not have a right to know about these choices and the proposals that are being made to the Government? Why is he refusing to keep Canadians informed of what is going on?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, we are not backing away from these problems and certainly we are not causing problems the same way the Hon. Member's Government did some six years ago.

Let me leave one thought with the Hon. Member so he can mull it over in his mind in the next week and a half. There are certain transactions which are under way right now that, and