

Oral Questions

Mr. Howie: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his representation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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ENERGY**INQUIRY AS TO DIVISION OF REVENUES FROM PROPOSED OIL PRICE INCREASE**

Mr. Ian Watson (Châteauguay): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. It relates to the details of the Canada-Alberta oil pricing agreement which apparently have been leaked to the Leader of the New Democratic Party. Since the details reported so far indicate a virtual betrayal of the national interest in favour of Alberta and its heritage fund, can the Prime Minister reassure this House that the division of revenues resulting from any new oil price increase will put the national interest first, and that a major per cent—I repeat, a major per cent of those new revenues will be channelled to the benefit of all the people of Canada through the Government of Canada?

● (1210)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, naturally I am not going to announce details of the programs until they are ready for announcement. I would urge the hon. member not to take the declarations of the Leader of the New Democratic Party on this matter any more seriously than he has on other matters in the past.

I can assure the House that there will be respect for two fundamental principles, and one, of course, is the jurisdiction of the provinces over resources. Another that is fundamentally important is that this agreement will generate enough revenues for the Government of Canada to participate in and to encourage the funding of activities in the energy field, principally by Canadian citizens, so we can move dramatically from a situation we inherited from the old government, in which we were depending increasingly on foreign sources of supply, and move this nation toward a situation where we are taking full advantage of our unique resource wealth and build for the future of Canada.

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[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT**ALARMING SITUATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED—REQUEST FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOVERNMENT POLICY**

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Madawaska-Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Given the situation of the unemployed in northwestern New Brunswick who succeeded in having the unemployment office closed this week as a result of the vigorous protests which they have been voicing for over a month; given the insensitivity of the Minister of Empla-

ment and Immigration who refuses to deal with that specific situation while we are told that the regional director is going to announce next week in a release to the unemployed what recourse they have under the existing legislation; and given also the position of the Minister for Employment and Immigration who allows defeated Progressive Conservative candidates to announce Canada Works projects, could the Prime Minister, who likes setting up commissions and launching investigations, tell us whether he is going to have a peep at what is going on in the office of the Minister of Employment and Immigration and see for himself the extent of patronage activities in this office and also tell the minister that he should deal with the problems of the unemployed in New Brunswick and Vancouver which were ignored by the Prime Minister last week, and of the other unemployed people who want to work and are waiting for the announcement of government projects to go out and get jobs? What is the Prime Minister waiting for?

[English]

Hon. Ron Atkey (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the difficult situation in Edmundston, and it has been difficult, is a result of protest against legislation that was introduced and passed by the previous government; that is, the provisions of what was Bill C-14. I must say that I share some concerns that are no doubt shared by those engaged in the protest, and for that reason I established a review process to look at those provisions, as well as others, to bring greater equity to the unemployment insurance program. That process of review is proceeding.

In so far as Canada Works grants are concerned, Mr. Speaker—there were two questions submitted—I would indicate that all the applications for the province of New Brunswick have been completed and approvals are out. There is still one minor item in the riding of Madawaska-Victoria in respect of which I am still waiting for submissions from the hon. member and from others in the region. There is some \$150,000 available to alleviate the unemployment situation in that particular region, and I will be pleased to respond as soon as I have the submissions from the region.

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[Translation]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**INQUIRY AS TO MINISTER'S ACTION TO REMEDY SOCIAL INSTABILITY IN NORTHWEST NEW BRUNSWICK**

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Madawaska-Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question. The situation in northwestern New Brunswick is very serious. Threats have been made. I do not ask the minister to express his concern but I ask him what he is going to do immediately to resolve the social instability prevailing in that area. Is he waiting for another Bathurst? Is he waiting for the situation to get out of control