

*Oral Questions*

Quebec on the same level as those from other provinces and to treat them accordingly?

**Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, yes. Notwithstanding the statements made by the premier of Quebec about me last week, I must say this will not in any way change my attitude toward the province of Quebec and its citizens and that I am still willing to negotiate agreements with the Quebec government, of course within my responsibilities. I hope we can sign those agreements very soon, after our respective officials have presented and analyzed to my satisfaction the contents of those agreements. Because there is more to it than signing agreements and investing money in them: we must also make sure that what we will be doing under those agreements does meet the objectives at least we at DREE are pursuing.

POSSIBILITY OF DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING AGREEMENTS WITH QUEBEC

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

You will doubtless understand that I am somewhat worried by the remarks I heard this afternoon on the radio, as I was proceeding from Montmagny to Ottawa. A reporter was claiming that Quebec is no longer willing to negotiate agreements with the central government unless these agreements respect the sovereignty of the government of the province of Quebec, failing which there would be no agreement signed at all. Could the minister advise the House whether any similar statement was made in his presence during recent discussions with officials or political representatives of the Quebec government? If so is he in a position to inform the House of any such statements or conversations?

**Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised to hear of these remarks by a reporter, because the Quebec government and I never had to deal with or discuss the question of the province's jurisdiction or priorities in the sense indicated here. What we are proposing now fully respects Quebec's jurisdiction and priorities, for we are not trying in any way to stop the Quebec government from doing whatever it means to do. As a matter of fact, we are trying to accelerate the realization of projects in a number of Quebec areas about which we are especially concerned.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF CARIBBEAN DELEGATION TO COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Speaker:** Before recognizing the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands, may I just borrow half a minute to say that, during this past weekend we conducted, I think successfully, the Canadian regional meetings of the

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and extended an invitation to representatives of the Caribbean region to join us. Our meetings were graced with a rather strong delegation from the Caribbean region. I think there was a very fruitful exchange between the two regions. We were also fortunate to have during the meetings the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, who is with us in the gallery today along with our Caribbean friends, Sir Robin Vanderfelt. May I ask Sir Robin and all our Caribbean visitors to rise for a moment.

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

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ENERGY

NORTHERN PIPELINE—REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF PROPOSAL TO DEBATE ISSUE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Privy Council arising out of his statement in the House last Friday to the effect that there should be a triple veto on the construction of a northern pipeline, first by the National Energy Board, then by the government and finally by parliament. However, later in his speech the minister spoke of providing an opportunity to hear the views of parliament before any decision is taken. In order to prevent any misunderstanding, I should like to ask the minister whether he would clarify the situation and tell the House whether or not we are correct in assuming that the government is making a twofold commitment, first that when all reports have been made available there will be a debate in parliament to ascertain the views of the House, and secondly, that when the government has reached a decision with respect to a pipeline, parliament will have an opportunity to approve or reject the decision before any permit for the construction of a pipeline has been granted?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, that certainly is a succinct summary of my statement. I might add some qualifications to the interpretation. With respect to the triple veto, I said that a pipeline could not be built unless it had been recommended by the National Energy Board, by the government and then by parliament. I had not taken into account the contingency where no decision would be taken and no pipeline would be built. That is the only qualification I would make.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the National Energy Board report is expected some time in July and the right hon. Prime Minister has promised President Carter a decision by September 1, does this mean that, if parliament is recessed at the time, it will be called back into session in order to discuss the National Energy Board report and also to express its views with respect to the government's final decision whether or not a pipeline should be built?