

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the entire question of the financial situation of the MEA was not discussed at a meeting with me.

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IMMIGRATION

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REQUESTS BY OTHER COUNTRIES THAT CANADA ADMIT CERTAIN NUMBER

Hon. Stanley Haidasz (Parkdale): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether the United States, other governments or international institutions have requested the Canadian government to accept a certain number of Vietnamese refugees with whom they are unable to cope and, if so, what is the government going to do about it?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): As of this morning, Mr. Speaker, the government has agreed to accept up to 2,000 Vietnamese refugees who have been airlifted to the United States or United States territories—this is in response to a request of the United States government—and up to 1,000 refugees who have gathered at points outside Viet Nam. I am thinking of places like Bangkok and Hong Kong. There are some people turning up there now who have escaped to Thailand and other countries.

I might say that this 3,000 is over and above the commitment we have made in respect of sponsored and nominated relatives of Canadian citizens or landed immigrants in Canada, although frankly and unfortunately in the latter case it is very doubtful that very many of these people in fact got out of Viet Nam and will be coming forward. I do have information now that there are some 82 at Guam and 10 at Wake Island. We are dispatching an immigration team with medical assistance to work in co-operation with Americans in these locations, particularly in respect of relatives of Canadians who have indicated they have arrived at these places.

Mr. Haidasz: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister whether the government of Canada has or will be approaching the new government in South Viet Nam with a request that the relatives of Canadian Vietnamese be allowed to come to Canada?

● (1430)

Mr. Andras: Mr. Speaker, I would have to defer a response to that question to my colleague the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

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INDUSTRY

MICROSYSTEMS—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO RECOVER AMOUNT OF INVESTMENT—SUGGESTED INVESTIGATION OF RELATIONSHIP WITH NORTHERN ELECTRIC

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo-Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Would he outline to the

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House whether he is presently attempting to recover the more than \$37 million invested in Microsystems by the Canadian government?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, we are making efforts to get repayment of the loan of nearly \$7 million which was secured, but the balance of some \$30 million involved conditional grants—that is, they were repayable out of profits. As the hon. member knows, the Microsystems Company lost some \$45 million and it is very unlikely that we will ever obtain any part of that.

Mr. Saltsman: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. In view of the fact that Northern Electric will, as it turns out, be picking up the assets and will not lose a penny on its investment in Microsystems, will the minister tell the House whether he hopes to recover any of the money from Northern Electric?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated I would expect to negotiate and obtain a substantial part, I hope all, of the outstanding loan of nearly \$7 million.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge on a final supplementary.

Mr. Saltsman: Mr. Speaker, in view of the large sums of money that have been invested in this company and the rather disastrous way in which this money has been lost, I wonder whether the minister would investigate, or set up a committee to look into, the entire affairs of Microsystems and its relationship with Northern Electric, perhaps both as a way to find out why this money went down the drain and to make sure that this does not happen again.

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, we have of course been in conversation with the officials of Northern Electric and Microsystems and have attempted to ensure that the Canadian public's interest will be fully secured. We are, of course, on a continuing basis trying to learn from this experience, but I think the hon. member will realize that when you are supporting an advance in technology you do so for two reasons, either because of the risk or the amount involved or both. In other words, the projects would not otherwise be undertaken by the Canadian private sector without government assistance. In companies of this size, heavy risks clearly are involved and you do not win them all.

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ENERGY

NATURAL GAS—POSSIBLE DISCUSSIONS WITH ALBERTA PRIOR TO PRICE INCREASE—EFFECT OF PRICE INCREASE ON NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Did the minister or any official of his department have a discussion with the Alberta government or the Energy Board in Alberta before the announced increase in the price of natural gas of about 70 per cent which came forward yesterday.