

the oil and gas industry. I must say that I have not received very much help from the New Democratic Party in getting those bills through, nor have I had very much support from that party for our taxation. I have wondered why not. Why have they been so silent? Let me tell the hon. member—

Mr. Deans: Did it ever occur to you that you are wrong?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is really—however, I will not be as unkind to him as he is occasionally to me.

Mr. Crosbie: Attaway, Uriah!

Mr. Nowlan: You tender soul!

● (1450)

Mr. MacEachen: Is the hon. member serious in suggesting that in a period of five or six months, after having this rather high interest rate experience, we can turn back a deeply embedded inflation, which is not only embedded in our structures in the economy but embedded in expectations? Does he really believe that it can be turned aside in five months, or a year or two years—

An hon. Member: You created it.

Mr. Nielsen: It is wrestled to the ground.

Mr. MacEachen:—when it took about ten years to build that disbelief in the minds of the public—

Mr. Nowlan: You built it.

Mr. MacEachen:—about the value of the Canadian currency? Does the hon. member believe that?

Mr. Nowlan: You are an ostrich.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PAYMENT BY U.S.S.R. FOR DAMAGE CAUSED BY DISINTEGRATION OF SATELLITE

Mr. W. Kenneth Robinson (Etobicoke-Lakeshore): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact it cost \$14 million to search and find the radioactive material resulting from the disintegration of a Soviet satellite over the Northwest Territories on January 24, 1978, will the minister advise why he has accepted only \$3 million in damages from the Soviet Union? Is it because the minister feels in some way that Canada has some responsibility for the cleanup, or is it because only a few pieces of the satellite which carried radioactive material were found?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I know the hon. gentleman, who is a very distinguished lawyer, will understand how negotiations normally proceed. This was a matter of very difficult and prolonged negotiations with the Soviet Union. The figure which he has mentioned represents the compromise on which we were able to agree.

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THE ECONOMY

PROJECTIONS RESPECTING ECONOMIC INDICES

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

The Minister of Finance took some umbrage at what a member might say to him. I have to say to the Minister of Finance that the House of Commons and the country are beginning to wonder whether or not the Minister of Finance, his department or the government really knows where they are going, or whether they have any answers. That is the reason for this question period today, and it is also the reason, Madam Speaker, why the next two days of debate will be on economic matters.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): I think it is important to the country that the House understands what the government is acting upon when it takes the position it does.

In the interests of clarity and in the interests of allowing the House to understand, would the Minister of Finance now undertake, having had notice of two days of debate, to entertain motions in the name of our party with respect to the economy? Would he also undertake to file, prior to the beginning of the debate, the forecasts and new projections of the department with respect to interest rates, rates of inflation, the Bank of Canada rate, as well as projections with respect to energy prices in Canada so that all of the facts will be on the table, and members of the House of Commons, together with members of the public, can make a judgment as to whether the Minister of Finance and the government really have any economic policies at all?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member will have to make up his own mind on these matters. I have already provided projections in the budget, not only for this year but for last year and for three years ahead. When the occasion justifies it, I will be very glad to revise the projections, but it is not my intention to provide a new array of projections which in the circumstances, as the hon. member knows, are very uncertain. I do not believe, in these uncertain times, that one ought to lay too much emphasis upon projections years down the road.