

applaud, and that the excessive taxation was due strictly to the taxation by the Provinces. Does the Minister accept this government reply?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)): Yes.

● (1125)

MEMBERSHIP OF TASK FORCE

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Mr. Speaker, in a letter dated February 20 from the Minister of Finance he points out to all government Members how to answer their constituents and shareholders in the distilling industry. He explains his great concern that the federal share of revenue from alcohol has dropped from 41 per cent to 31 per cent, that a task force has been established to look into the matter, that they will consider alternatives which meet the objectives of both the industry and the Government, and that meetings of the task force are under way. He says further that he trusts his remarks will be helpful in replying to their constituents.

What about our constituents, Mr. Speaker, and the jobs lost to the people we represent in this industry? I would like to know who is on the task force, how often have they met, what are the objectives, and will we on this side have input, or will it be like the Local Initiatives Employment Program?

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, the task force is chaired by a vice-president of the Toronto Dominion Bank, Doug Peters, who is currently on loan to the federal Government. The members of the task force have been nominated and supplied by the associations most directly involved in the question. They are currently reviewing the situation. The Member opposite, indeed any Member of the House, or for that matter any Canadian, is welcome to make his or her views known to the task force. I am sure the task force will want to take those views into account.

The task force is charged with a broad review of the industry and of fiscal policy as it affects the industry. It will, of course, address the question of the proportions of taxation represented by provincial Governments and the federal Government. It will address the question to the impact of taxation policies at the federal and provincial levels on the further growth and development of the industries affected. If the Hon. Member wishes to make his contribution, I am sure the task force would welcome it.

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FISHERIES

GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS PLANT—SCHEDULED ANNOUNCEMENT BY MINISTER

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Fisheries my question is directed to the Acting Minister. Last Friday my good friend, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, stated in Prince Edward Island that within a week the federal Government would be in a position to announce the details of the reopening of the Georgetown

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Seafoods plant in Prince Edward Island. Since that week is now up, I wonder if the Acting Minister would be in a position to share with the House the details of that reopening.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I think I can answer the question. I am aware that the Minister of Fisheries is working on that subject very, very intensely. I am aware that he is going to live up to the commitment he has made, and that he will inform the House as soon as he can.

REQUEST THAT ANNOUNCEMENT BE MADE IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, although it is apparent that the Acting Prime Minister does not have a clue about the question posed to him, I wonder if he would, nevertheless, assure the House in the name of fairness, if nothing else, that such an announcement will be made in the House of Commons to Members who have been asking questions about this for the last two years, rather than in the forum of a partisan function on Prince Edward Island before only Liberal Members in Prince Edward Island?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of External Relations): Mr. Speaker, every Minister has a choice to make when he has news to announce, particularly when it is good news. I will bring the representation made by my hon. friend to the attention of the Minister of Fisheries.

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IMMIGRATION

HEAD TAX IMPOSED ON CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. From 1885 to 1923 the Canadian Government levied a discriminatory and racist head tax only on Chinese immigrants. This was followed by complete exclusion of any Chinese immigrants until 1947. In order to make amends for this shameful period in our history, and to recognize our new Charter of Rights which should prevent such future discrimination against ethnic minorities, will the Minister forward a request to the Prime Minister asking that he, on behalf of Canada, formally acknowledge these injustices to Canadians of Chinese origin?

● (1130)

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have heard about this one. I learned yesterday about Baltic Consuls and things of that kind. My education is progressing. I will look into that particular matter. I would believe, however, on the face of it, that the legislation on human rights is not retroactive. However, I will look into the matter and see if a more generous approach could be taken.