

jurisdiction that they have less health and safety protection than those working under provincial jurisdiction, when does the minister plan to take action to implement the provisions of Ontario's Bill 70 as a regulation to federal health and safety legislation, as was done for Saskatchewan uranium miners?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, in answering this question—which is the first question related to my labour portfolio—I want to take advantage of the occasion to pay tribute to my predecessor, who is not in the House this afternoon but who is slated in two or three months to leave the House, the hon. member for Hamilton West. I would like pay tribute to the work he did during his time in the Department of Labour. In dealing with these problems I am able to benefit from his work.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Regan: The problem the hon. member speaks about arises from the fact that in 1978 it was determined by the Department of Justice that part IV of the Canada Labour Code applies to conventional mine safety in uranium mines. Prior to that time we depended upon provincial legislation in relation to mine safety.

When that discovery, or finding, was made, it was necessary for the federal government either to develop regulations and laws in relation to conventional mine safety in uranium mines or adopt, by reference, the provincial laws. What was done is that by reference the federal government at that time adopted the rules of the province of Saskatchewan and those of the province of Ontario, and those are the ones that are in effect at the present time. However, subsequently—

An hon. Member: Order.

Mr. Regan: It is an involved question, but I will try to make my answer very short.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Would the minister try to give us an answer that is not too involved?

Mr. Clark: Read every second line.

Mr. Regan: What it amounts to is that the province of Ontario subsequently changed its law after the referencing had occurred, and during the past few months, at the request of the United Steelworkers' Union, the department has been working with them in the developing of a new set of federal regulations. Our target for them to be in effect is late May, and we are hoping to keep to that target.

ENERGY

PROTECTION OF LOWER-INCOME GROUPS FROM SEVERE PRICE INCREASES

Hon. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and

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Resources. The minister has indicated that negotiations for a significant increase in oil prices are under way. To offset the impact of such increases, the previous government proposed a system of grants and tax credits which would have been especially beneficial in the Atlantic provinces.

What plans does the minister have to shelter Canadians in Atlantic Canada and in the lower and middle-income groups from the severity of such increases?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I do not know whether the hon. member was present in the House at the beginning of the question period, but the Prime Minister indicated that the increase for this year, for instance, will be less than half that foreseen by the Tory budget of last December.

As far as the other points raised by the hon. member are concerned, I am beginning discussions with my provincial colleagues, starting this week. I will be meeting with my colleagues from the Atlantic provinces in the course of the next few days.

I will have an opportunity to exchange with them various views about the future of oil pricing in this country and what measures should be taken. I will be very happy to inform the hon. member about developments later on.

• (1450)

Mr. Howie: I thank the minister very much for his answer, whatever it was, and I ask him what plans he has to breathe life into renewable energy research and development in Atlantic Canada, to expedite Fundy tidal development and the Maritime Energy Corporation by investing financially in renewable energy projects in the Atlantic provinces where high energy costs aggravate the problems of regional disparity.

Mr. Lalonde: No doubt this is something that will be discussed with my colleagues in the next few days. However, the hon. member knows, I believe, that additional funding has been provided for those projects over the last few years.

In addition, one of the serious problems, I regret to say, has been the inability of the maritime provinces, in some cases, to agree among themselves on how they wanted to proceed with some of the projects. As the hon. member knows, there were some agreements and there were some disagreements. I would hope the three maritime provinces, in particular, will be able to work very closely together and to co-operate fully with regard to these projects, because they are indeed very important for the future of energy in the maritimes.

AGRICULTURE

PROVISIONS OF MEAT IMPORT LEGISLATION

Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. I am sure the minister is aware and pleased at the response of Canada's