

Oral Questions

would be a tripartite forum which would include business, government and labour, and given the fact there has been no indication of labour either agreeing with that policy or being prepared to participate in it, would the minister inform us whether it is still government policy to proceed, in line with the first point of the Minister of Labour's 14 points, with the establishment of this multipartite, national forum?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): It is very difficult to force anybody to join in a body like that, to take part in discussions. They decided they would not participate in the work of the Economic Council. We have put forward other propositions. We have met with them many times. They are reluctant to enter formally into such a body. In the course of two meetings with them, I said I was not seeking their concurrence but trying to communicate with them and explain the type of policies we were developing. Of course, they will always be welcome to come back into the Economic Council or other organizations, but they make their own decisions and we have to make ours.

Mr. Fraser: The minister talks about forcing the labour movement. That is not the question. Given the fact that there is no practical possibility of labour entering into either a multipartite or a tripartite, national forum, why does the government persist in asserting that this is government policy? It has been clear to everybody for a year or 18 months now that it will never come about.

Mr. Chrétien: It is because we feel it is desirable to get the collaboration of the labour movement to achieve our policies. But if they do not want to come in formally, we shall keep the channels open in an informal way. In the meantime, we are going back into the marketplace; we have decided we need somebody to watch the development of prices and wages, and so on, to inform the public on inflation, and we have asked the Economic Council if they are willing to undertake that role. We have not yet received a final decision from the council, but when a decision is reached we will make it known to the House of Commons.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**KITIMAT PIPELINE—INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT WILL SEEK ADVICE FROM NEB**

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for the Environment. It has to do with the government's decision not to exercise the option of building a west coast tanker port in Kitimat and a pipeline to tie in with the TransMountain pipeline. In light of the fact that the National Energy Board has before it an application for such a pipeline and is still considering that option, can the minister inform the House whether the government intends to seek the advice of the board, or whether its decision as to that option is final?

[Mr. Fraser.]

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Environment)): I am not entirely sure of all the legalities involved here. The hon. member might more properly direct his question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources under whose jurisdiction the National Energy Board comes.

Mr. Oberle: I would, instead, like to direct a further question to the Minister of State for the Environment. It concerns the Thompson inquiry which he has chosen not to reactivate in spite of the fact that this pipeline may still be built. Would the minister not agree that the inquiry should have been reactivated, if for no other reason than to study the even less attractive option of a tanker route down the west coast, to study the environmental and socioeconomic impact of the tankers which will carry the oil if they are not going into Kitimat?

Mr. Marchand: The hon. member and others may raise all kinds of arguments relating to the decision which was made, but if I were the Kitimat oil company, or any other oil company, I would think twice before proceeding with an application because the government of Canada made a very clear decision on the question of west coast oil ports, reflecting our view that we do not see the need for a west coast oil port in the foreseeable future.

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EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION**INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration: it relates to the International Youth Exchange Program which has brought young people from various parts of Europe to Canada on a temporary basis to engage and participate in the agricultural activities of the prairie provinces. The federal government has seen fit to cut back on this particular program.

In view of the fact that the province of Alberta has decided to opt out of this program and to participate in one of its own, called the Alberta Agricultural Host Family Exchange Program, I wonder if the minister could explain to the House the status of those negotiations. Could he explain the reason for the delay, and could he estimate the number of people who will have the opportunity to come to Alberta? As there is some urgency about this matter, I hope the minister will take into consideration the fact that many host families are depending upon these individuals to come from European countries.

● (1152)

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me notice of this question yesterday. I might say the matter was also raised by my colleagues, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the hon. member for Battleford—Kindersley. As a result of the hon. member's representations and those of my colleagues, I met with my deputy minister to discuss this situation. Because of the high unemployment, we decided that