

Oral Questions

FINANCE

POSITION OF PROVINCES ON TAXATION OF RESOURCES—
GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In light of the fact that the province of Quebec backed Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia in reference to provincial rights as far as resources are concerned, and in light of the fact that the minister stonewalled any compromise of the ministers of finance of the various provinces, is he going to take the same hard, cold, unreasonable, untenable attitude with the premiers of the provinces when he meets them?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, in the last two days a good many of the provinces, while supporting Alberta's position in principle, also took the view that it was a question of numbers sharing revenues; this included Quebec, which after having stated its constitutional issues, proposed a compromise in terms of the amount of the abatement.

● (1530)

Mr. Woolliams: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the report was not accurate, but I think it was. Did not Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta all support the position that resources belong to the province and the government's decision to tax resources without allowing royalties to be deducted from income calculations is untenable?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, that, generally, is true. On the other hand Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and, to a certain extent, Ontario and New Brunswick took different positions.

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FISHERIES

INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAM—CONSULTATION WITH
PROVINCES—REQUEST FOR PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State responsible for Fisheries. As fishermen in eastern Canada are suffering difficulties because of storm damage, foreign vessels and other stultifying causes and as it is difficult for them to qualify for unemployment insurance, will the minister indicate what progress has been made by his department or the Department of Manpower with respect to the income support program which was announced many months ago?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)): Mr. Speaker, the answer is similar to the answer I gave some time ago. We are actively working on this matter, but I am not satisfied that the first draft submitted to me was possibly an improvement on what we already have, and for this reason I cannot fix a timetable for this matter.

Mr. Marshall: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell the House if, as a result of his consultations within the past few days with the Minister

[Mr. Munro (Hamilton East).]

of Fisheries for Newfoundland, ideas have been put forward about the income support program. Also, what consultation is now taking place with the government of the province in order to establish such a program within a reasonable time, as it would help the fishermen of eastern Canada?

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I have had extensive discussions with the Minister of Fisheries for Newfoundland. That was one of the issues we raised, although it was really dovetailed with some of the serious problems the fishery is encountering in the province. We are giving a great deal of time and importance to those long-term problems.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

ALLEGED DENIAL OF BENEFITS TO BRITISH COLUMBIA
RAILWAY WORKERS—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Jack Pearsall (Coast Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Can the minister advise the House about the latest development involving the Unemployment Insurance Commission and the workers of the British Columbia railroad? Can he say whether the workers are entitled to unemployment insurance benefits.

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the Unemployment Insurance Commission announced this morning, I believe, that members of the unions other than the five shopcraft unions will not be disentitled under section 44(1)(a) as from November 17. The hon. member for Vancouver South communicated with me the other evening about this matter when he raised it in the late show. I wish to make the point that the decision to remove disentitlement was not as a result of my intervention. I cannot claim that credit. The action was based on information which came forward subsequently and which relates, quite properly, to a point of jurisprudence. On that basis the Unemployment Insurance Commission made its decision.

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ENERGY

WITHDRAWAL OF COMPANIES FROM ALBERTA OIL SANDS
PROJECT—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO ENSURE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. As an increasing number of firms, including Shell Explorer, Atlantic Richfield, Candel Oil and Home Oil, have indicated that they are either withdrawing from the Alberta oil sands project or contemplating doing so, and as this puts in jeopardy the three major plants—apart from the great Canadian Oil Sands plant which is already in production—which the National Energy Board says should be in production by 1982 or 1983, has the minister any announcement about steps the government intends to take in order to ensure that the development of these oil sands will go forward on time and