

Oral Questions

honourably in representing their clients before government agencies.

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● (1140)

MARINE TRANSPORT

TASK FORCE REPORT

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The Minister has recently received the Report of the Task Force on Deep-Sea Shipping. Its recommendations frustrate the hopes of many Canadians, including those who sail the seas, that we shall see Canadian-owned and registered merchant vessels on the high seas. Will the Minister indicate whether he plans to accept the recommendations of the task force, or does he appreciate that Canada could use its very large export trade to develop a large merchant marine if only we had the right policies?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think the task force has brought forth a number of good recommendations. I think it is realistic in view of the times. We are examining it very carefully. There are a number of proposals which can be accepted by the Government which will serve to strengthen Canada's influence and participation in the international shipping community.

TAX LEGISLATION RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, is the Minister giving any consideration to the dubious recommendation that tax legislation should be used to create Canadian-owned international shipping corporations, whose ships would remain registered elsewhere and sail with foreign crews, under the lax laws of foreign countries?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Hon. Member that we are looking very seriously at creating a climate which would be conducive for the Canadian shipping industry to grow so that it would be treated taxwise in a manner more consistent with that of the international community. Discussions are ongoing with my Cabinet colleagues, and we hope that we will be able to provide a more favourable climate in order that the very important shipping industry in Canada can flourish.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA-ISRAEL RELATIONS

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. A report on Canada's relations with countries in the Middle East and North Africa was tabled in the other place this week. My

question to the Prime Minister concerns what I believe to be an unbalanced and misleading report. What effect, if any, will it have on Canada's policy toward Israel, and the search for peace in that vital area of the world?

Mr. Prud'homme: Did you read it?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis asked if I had read it. No, I have not yet had an opportunity to read it.

Mr. Prud'homme: No, not you, him.

Mr. Mulroney: I want to make it very clear that Canada's policy toward the Middle East is based on an unshakable commitment to the integrity and independence of the State of Israel. Nothing will cause the Government of Canada to waver in its long and steadfast support for Israel's security and well-being. We will continue to support credible efforts at all times with moderate and thoughtful nations in the area, to secure for the region a just and enduring peace.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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THE BUDGET

CHANGES TO FAMILY ALLOWANCES

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. Since the Prime Minister stated this morning that the budget proposal to deindex senior citizens' pensions violated the principle of fairness, will the Minister agree that that applies equally to the proposed changes to family allowances?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): No, Mr. Speaker. I think the proposed changes to the family benefit package have been very fair, very progressive, and will result in those families who need the help the most receiving a greater amount of support as these changes are phased in over the next three or four years. The child tax credit will increase significantly during that period. I believe it will increase by approximately \$140 a year. There will be some shift in the resources because of the child tax exemption which currently favours those in upper-income brackets. That will be phased back so that we can direct more support to those most in need.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, the very poorest will receive marginal increases, but if a family is barely above the poverty line they will lose benefits and they will face higher living costs because of the increased sales tax. Will the Minister agree to review further this matter over the summer, and try to bring back a fair proposal in the fall?