

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Oberle:** Space is a major strategic tool, as we have already announced. Industrial innovation is a top priority with the Government. There are no cuts to the NRC. In fact, because new ideas, programs and tasks were assigned to the NRC, including the space program, the industrial technology centre program, the biotechnology centre program in Montreal—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

## NUMBER OF COUNCIL'S EMPLOYEES

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, there are now 3,100 people employed at the NRC. Can the Minister assure us that a year from now there will still be 3,100 people working at the NRC? If not, how many will be working at the NRC a year from now?

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, the NRC is probably about 800 people short. I can assure the Hon. Member that the NRC will in the future as it has in the past be one of the most critical and important instruments for taking our country into the 21st century and that it will make its contributions to this task as it has in the past.

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## ENERGY

## JOBS CREATED BY ENERGY INDUSTRY

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy. The Minister is now saying that energy is not a job-creation sector. This is in direct contradiction to his predecessor who said that energy would be an engine of growth creating between 100,000 and 300,000 jobs. Does this mean that the Minister is now abandoning the energy industry, throwing another 70,000 people out of work to go along with the 40,000 who have already lost their jobs in the energy sector?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, although the question was long, the answer is simple: I never made such claims.

[English]

## GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY SECTOR

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Alberta has said that he expects financial assistance from the federal Government before the end of October. Will the Minister state whether this assistance will be provided for the energy sector now, or is the Minister going to ignore the problem completely?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I expect to meet with the Alberta Minister of Energy sometime next week or early the week after. I will be very glad to discuss these questions with him.

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[English]

## FINANCE

## NON PAYMENT OF TAXES BY CORPORATIONS

**Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Finance elaborate on the Government's Throne Speech promises of fairness in the tax system? For the past week we have been asking questions about the 79,000 profitable Canadian corporations which paid no taxes in 1983 despite making \$13 billion in profits. Has the Minister taken the trouble to look into this situation? Does it persist? Can the Minister tell the House how much revenue the Government is losing because these corporations are profitable but do not pay taxes?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member, in the course of the last couple of months, has been looking at the various changes that we have made to the tax system over the past two years. These changes have been directed at the very concern he has expressed. I appreciate his implicit support for all the good things that we have been doing in that direction.

As the Hon. Member knows, we have announced that we want to accelerate the actions we have been taking on tax reform. One of the key elements of this will be increased fairness in the tax system. Another will be to bring about a tax system which is simpler than the one we have today. I am delighted that the Hon. Member has taken an interest in this and I look forward to his ongoing support.

## GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I assure the Hon. Minister that I will continue to take an interest in this particular area, but perhaps he could respond to my question. Does the situation of some 80,000 corporations being profitable every year but not paying taxes persist? Will the Minister undertake to return to the House this month with specific figures telling us how much revenue we are losing because the Government will not collect taxes from those companies which make profits?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I did address the Hon. Member's question in my first answer. We have been aware of this problem that was left by the previous Government but we have not just talked about it, we have acted upon it. We have acted upon it by changing the carve-out legislation, by changing the scientific research tax