

conference when the proper place to do so is right here in the House of Commons.

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FINANCE

BUDGETARY DEFICIT FORECAST FOR 1979

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): My supplementary is addressed to the Minister of Finance, who laughs at the question of fiscal restraint. Would the hon. gentleman indicate what he anticipates will be the budgetary deficit for fiscal 1979, bearing in mind that it is \$9.2 billion estimated for fiscal 1978? Does he expect it to be more, or less, than that figure?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): First, Mr. Speaker, may I say I am very surprised that there is no question from the official opposition today with regard to the inflation rate.

Some hon. Members: Oh, Oh!

Mr. Chrétien: Could it be they do not want to acknowledge that there is a big reduction? As far as cash requirements for next year are concerned, we have acknowledged that there will be a special problem next year because we shall be obliged to cope with the expenditure of \$2 billion in interest payments on Canada Savings Bonds. The total cash performance will be known when I present my budget.

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[Translation]

ENERGY

NUCLEAR CONTROL COMMISSION—UNIONS' REPRESENTATION

Mr. Prosper Boulanger (Mercier): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, or to the acting minister if the former is not here.

In light of the fact that Bill C-14 on nuclear control will increase membership on the Nuclear Control Board from five to nine members, does the minister intend to appoint a union representative on the board as was requested by the Director of the United Steelworkers, Mr. Docquier, in order to make sure the workers have their say regarding safety on the job?

[English]

Hon. James Hugh Faulkner (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): I will take note of the representation and pass it on to my colleague.

Oral Questions

• (1442)

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

COMPENSATION BY U.S.S.R. FOR COST OF RECOVERING DEBRIS FROM SATELLITE

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Further to the talks the minister had over the weekend at the United Nations, may I ask him whether he has officially submitted a claim to the U.S.S.R. in order to compensate for Canada's expenditures in recovering the debris of Cosmos 954 which fell on our soil?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, no official claim has been put to the U.S.S.R. So far, we have notified the Secretary General. Initially, I did that by way of a formal letter, and I did it in person with Mr. Waldheim yesterday. We have also notified the Soviet Union. Incidentally, I received some clarification yesterday from the Secretary General on this matter. The next step is to determine the technique through which the costs can be identified as being related to this activity. Of course, also we are awaiting a response from the U.S.S.R., which has not arrived as yet, indicating what their reaction is to our note in this regard.

I suspect it will be some time before there is any further clarification. Also, I should add that the search is continuing; therefore, at this point we would not want to identify a final cost. It may be possible to put in some kind of interim billing, but we would not want to cut ourselves off from the availability of presenting these charges and costs for as long as the operation is continuing.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

DAILY COST OF RECOVERING DEBRIS FROM SOVIET SATELLITE

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary but it is directed to the Minister of National Defence. Because of the government's apparent ignorance of what is in treaties 6 and 7, and the resultant bungling of the notification, it appears likely we will be stuck with the bill. Can the minister tell us how much the bill is as of now, and how much it is increasing, on a per diem basis?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I cannot give those precise figures. We know it is well in excess of \$1 million. Actually, it is beyond \$2 million at this time, if the full recovery costs are taken into consideration. That is difficult to define specifically, as the search is continuing. My last report, received yesterday, was something over 1,000 hours of flying time. This is continuing. Decisions are being made on the extent of the search and at what level it must be continued. The teams in charge of this operation are now on site and in the area. I will have more information,