

[English]

REQUEST THAT DISCUSSION OF ENERGY SUPPLIES  
EMERGENCY BILL AND TAX MEASURE BE POSTPONED  
UNTIL FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, agreeing with the minister's statement that the first ministers' conference is the proper forum for discussion of these matters which are of joint interest to both levels of government, in light of the effect of Bill C-236 and the bill founded on the ways and means motion he designated today, will he give very serious consideration to postponing further discussion of these bills until the first ministers' conference for the sake of promoting national unity and in an attempt to arrive at a reasonable settlement in a congenial atmosphere on January 23 and 24?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** With regard to Bill C-236, Mr. Speaker, we cannot fully anticipate all the events that may occur in the near future, but certainly one of the grave concerns is that there may be a sufficient interruption in the supply of oil coming to the eastern Canadian market that the customers in that market may, indeed, be prejudiced later in the winter. On that basis, rather than delay the bill I think it would be in the interests of all members from all parts of the country, perhaps even the hon. member for Peace River in particular as a member from Alberta, to make sure that some of our fellow citizens do not suffer because of events beyond our control.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

**Mr. Baldwin:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to say that the member for Peace River, like most people in Alberta, is far more concerned about doing something for the people of eastern Canada than is the Prime Minister who is willing to let them freeze.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

● (1500)

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I am very happy that the member for Peace River is indicating that the Alberta members are interested in assuring a supply of oil to Quebec and eastern Canada. I wonder if he could assure a supply of Alberta members to Quebec on the bilingual policy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

POSSIBLE EMBARGO ON OIL EXPORTS FROM UNITED  
STATES TO CANADA—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of statements made in the last few days in the United States that the

Oral Questions

government of that country is prepared to impose embargoes on the export of petroleum products from the United States to Canada, and in view of the importance to our energy supply of those exports to this country, has the minister been in touch with the United States government to find out whether or not that is the intention of that government and, if so, what effect does he think it will have on the energy supplies of this country?

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, it has been a matter of concern that supplies of certain refined products, particularly those going to the lower mainland of British Columbia, not be interrupted by any United States domestic policy. We will make certain that viewpoint continues to be indicated to the United States government.

\* \* \*

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

REQUEST THAT OPERATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT  
INSURANCE COMMISSION BE STUDIED BY STANDING  
COMMITTEE

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister regarding unemployment insurance. In light of the mounting criticism and concern about the cost and the effectiveness of the whole plan, and in view of conflicting statements by ministers on this matters, would the Prime Minister seriously consider having the whole question of the Unemployment Insurance Commission directed to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration so it can delve into the act and the regulations in order to bring about suggested amendments which perhaps could make this act more acceptable?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, as the House leader has indicated to the House of Commons, we hope we will be able to end this part of the session before Christmas and I think it would be unwise at this stage to charge the parliamentary committees with more work than is already assigned to them.

SUGGESTION THAT QUALIFYING PERIOD BE INCREASED

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact the Prime Minister has evaded that question, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In light of the fact that many concerned persons and experts have indicated that the qualifying period of eight weeks is too short, would the minister seriously consider bringing in legislation to increase the minimum qualifying period?

**Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, any contemplation of legislation regarding the Unemployment Insurance Act surely must be based on a much more profound and comprehensive examination than singling out one small aspect. I point out that there was ample opportunity in the spring to deal with these matters when the supplementary estimates were before the committee on estimates, and there