

Oral Questions

ethnic and cultural background, so perhaps he should reply.

An hon. Member: He hasn't got a kilt on.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, we are alive to the day and its significance as the feast day of Robert Burns whose immortal memory will be celebrated throughout the world today. Members of this House, many of whom have Scottish blood in their veins—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen:—including such unlikely gentlemen as the right hon. Prime Minister and the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert, will want to associate themselves with the many tributes that will be paid to the genius of Robert Burns today.

I congratulate the hon. member for Kingston and The Islands (Miss MacDonald) and the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) on their elegant and beautiful garb. I had intended wearing the kilt myself today but I decided against it. I thought that as House leader of a government in a minority situation I was sufficiently exposed!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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MAIN ESTIMATES, 1973-74**INQUIRY AS TO TABLING BY FEBRUARY 15**

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board on a much more mundane subject. Would the minister advise if it is his intention to table the estimates for the new fiscal year by February 15, and in so doing will he follow the usual custom of tabling the estimates before the budget?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I can say that we should be tabling the main estimates for 1973-74 around February 15, but whether this will be before the budget or after the budget I cannot answer.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY**OLD AGE PENSIONS—POSSIBILITY OF REDUCING AGE OF ELIGIBILITY TO 60**

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Are the officials of his department at present looking into the possibility of lowering the age of eligibility from 65 to 60?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This question is very similar to one that was asked a few moments ago and that was ruled out of order by the Chair.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

[English]

LABOUR RELATIONS**ELEVATOR WORKERS STRIKE—ASSISTANCE BY MANPOWER DEPARTMENT TO PERSONS FACING LAY-OFFS—ACTION TO ACHIEVE SETTLEMENT**

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration concerning the elevator strike which certainly has national consequences. Is he aware of the fact that as a result of the elevator strike Otis Elevator in Hamilton is contemplating laying off 500 people? If not, will he look into the circumstances in order that his department may assist in this very grave matter?

• (1500)

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I will ensure that the department is in communication with the company in question and that all possible action is taken.

Mr. Alexander: May I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact the elevator strike has reached national proportions, and even though it may be under provincial jurisdiction, has the minister determined if there is any way in which he can be involved? Has he been approached by his provincial counterparts? If so, what has been the result of any discussions?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): No, Mr. Speaker, I must advise the hon. member that I have not been approached. However, being equally as concerned as the hon. member over how serious the situation is, I contacted the provincial Minister of Labour, or his department, within the last couple of days. There is some hope, I understand, that the parties will come together again in the near future, hopefully leading to a settlement. It seems to be quite clear that the federal government has no jurisdiction in the matter.

Mr. Alexander: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As the minister has shown some initiative in this regard—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Alexander: I give him credit. Don't get excited. In view of the national effect of the strike in terms of inconvenience and financial loss, will the minister continue to stick his nose into this area in order that he can report to the House day by day or week by week?

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FISHERIES**REQUEST FOR FEDERAL ACTION TO PROTECT SALMON SPAWNING STREAMS**

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries. In view of the indicated interest in the preservation of salmon spawning streams on the part of the government of British Columbia as evidenced by the suspension of logging in at