

Oral Questions

tion with the revised draft AIB regulations, would the minister consider a reference of the regulations to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs so that the objections may be heard in an open forum?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): I am not sure how valuable that kind of reference would be at this point, with the anticipation that the House will soon be completing its work for the summer.

An hon. Member: Oh, no; we are here for a while.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I think the appropriate thing is to take account of the various representations that are made and to issue final regulations to meet the representations we have received from the business community. I would have to say ultimately of course that we should not be surprised to find that the system is more restrictive from the profit standpoint than perhaps the corporations would like. The point we would make is that they, as well as all other sectors of the community, must help to contribute to a reduction of inflation in Canada.

ALLEGED ADVANTAGE TO DISTRIBUTORS TO PURCHASE FROM FOREIGN SOURCES BECAUSE OF PRICES AND PROFITS REGULATIONS

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that the new AIB regulations, particularly the abolition of cost pass through, make it financially advantageous for distributors to purchase from manufacturers located in other countries rather than from domestic manufacturers, is the minister not concerned that the regulations will have a detrimental effect on output and employment in the Canadian manufacturing sector? If he is concerned, as he should be, what definite steps does the government intend to take to avoid further deterioration within the manufacturing sector in terms of employment and productivity?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): It is because we are concerned about the impact on the economy that we have gone to such trouble to consult with the business community before making the regulations definitive.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

PROPOSED ADOPTION OF POLICIES TO AID MANUFACTURERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address this supplementary question to the Prime Minister and ask him if the government intends to outline, perhaps in the forthcoming throne speech expected in the fall, definite long-range policies in respect of our nation's manufacturers and, may I add, to the often forgotten small business sector, as well as a policy that would replace the present harmful ad hoc attitude which has been in existence for some time in this

[Mr. Stevens.]

regard. Would the government be prepared to back any such policy proposals with appropriate legislation?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The question has an implication concerning ad hocery with which I disagree. The hon. member is making a suggestion for the Speech from the Throne. To the extent that the Speech from the Throne will deal mainly with the session which is to begin, I cannot promise to insert in it what the hon. member calls long-range policies presumably over a period of several sessions. But with this reservation, of course we will want to have the Speech from the Throne deal with matters to improve the economic situation in our country.

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LABOUR CONDITIONS

REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE AGREEMENTS WITH RAILWAYS AND LAKE CARRIERS MEET ANTI-INFLATION GUIDELINES

Mr. Joe Flynn (Kitchener): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. Can he assure the House that the settlements or agreements in the rail dispute and the Lakehead carriers dispute fall within the guidelines of the Anti-Inflation Board?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): No, I cannot, Mr. Speaker. However, I am very happy to see that the parties have come together in a settlement.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I might say that the settlement was based by and large on the recommendations contained in the report of Mr. Justice Emmet Hall. His conclusions were that his recommendations were within the guidelines. We will have to await a ruling from the AIB on that matter.

While I am on my feet I would like to advise the House also that the lake carriers on the St. Lawrence seaway arrived at a tentative settlement last night.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO NATIVES WHO HAVE MERCURY POISONING—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In view of the fact that the Indians in northwestern Ontario are suffering from mercury poisoning because of the failure of federal and provincial governments to enforce proper environmental standards, is the federal government prepared to pay direct compensation to native people on reserves who have symptoms of mercury poisoning?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member is aware, of course, we pay social assistance to all Indian