

STATUS OF COLD LAKE PROJECT

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): I have a supplementary for the same minister, Madam Speaker. The government has a \$40 million stake in the Imperial Oil project at Cold Lake, a project scheduled to proceed within a year of the energy agreement being signed,—actually a year since last June. Is the minister carrying on negotiations with Imperial Oil? Does he see the \$40 million that the government has invested in this project at stake at this time? Or will the project proceed?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, we are very keen on getting both the Alsands project at Fort McMurray and the Cold Lake project proceeding. The negotiations are being pursued by the officials. I have had an opportunity to discuss both projects with the heads of the corporations at various times in the last few months. We certainly hope we will reach satisfactory conclusions soon with regard to those two projects.

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ELIMINATION OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PUBLIC SERVICE POSITIONS

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): My question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board who has just returned from Prince Edward Island. With the recent signing of the third and final phase of the P.E.I. Comprehensive Development Plan, the federal government appears to have served notice that it intends to take over some programs on the Island previously cost shared between the two levels of government but administered by the province of Prince Edward Island.

This new approach has forced the government of Prince Edward Island to eliminate some 160 public service positions. Will the federal government try to lessen the blow to provincial public servants who have been laid off by making a real effort to hire those same public servants when the federal government assumes control over programs previously administered by the province?

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, the Minister responsible for DREE is not here today, and I believe the Minister of Veterans Affairs is also not here today. However, I have certain knowledge of the subject, and I would be pleased to make the information available to the hon. member. First of all, the action of the federal government taking over the direction of certain aspects of spending in the province has not accounted for lay-offs of the kind that the government of Prince Edward Island is trying to justify.

Last week in Prince Edward Island the Minister of Veterans Affairs pointed out that the total number of employees that might be affected by the direct involvement of the federal government would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 35, 45 or 50 of these employees. It is because the government of the island has not made sufficient provision for placing

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employees whom it knew would be laid off in any event as the program winds down toward the end of a 15-year period which expires in 1984.

In reply to the second part of the hon. member's question, there may indeed be opportunities for some employment in other sectors by reason of the federal government's involvement. However, I have no specific knowledge in that regard. I expect the minister for DREE will be addressing that question, together with his counterparts in other ministries, who have responsibility for certain aspects of the over-all program in Phase Three.

ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board obviously does not have the facts. Since the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion is not present in the House today, and he has not been in the House for question period since Parliament reconvened, I will direct my question to the Acting Minister of DREE. The federal government seems hell bent on obtaining as much political and partisan credit as it can get from expenditures of the federal government in areas of provincial or overlapping jurisdiction, by controlling more programs itself rather than having those programs administered by the provinces.

Following the recent signing of the P.E.I. Comprehensive Development Plan, has the federal government identified the specific programs in the DREE area that it intends to take over from the province? Has it looked into this matter? Has it addressed the problems? Has it identified the programs it plans to take over and, if so, what are those programs?

Hon. W. Bennett Campbell (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, for the benefit of the hon. member opposite I might shed a little light on the question that he asked. The number of positions that were terminated by the government of Prince Edward Island was 161. I indicated publicly, as have my colleagues in the various line departments, that for the number of programs directly affected where direct delivery of programs will imply a reduction in employees, that reduction amounts to between 38 and 51 positions. Unfortunately the government of Prince Edward Island has chosen to lay off individuals who, from the beginning of the plan, were never cost shared and were clearly in areas of provincial jurisdiction. It is a question that it must answer.

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THE CONSTITUTION

DISCUSSIONS WITH NATIVE COUNCIL OF CANADA

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister has given his word to the Native Council of Canada that he will meet with them to discuss matters that he will be discussing with the first ministers next week. Will the Prime Minister indicate