

Oral Questions

ENERGY

OIL EXPORT TAX—NATURE OF PROJECTS IN WHICH
REVENUE TO BE INVESTED

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. On Friday last the minister told the House that revenues from the oil export tax would, among other things, be invested in "other projects for the purpose of developing energy resources in Canada". Will he now tell the House whether these projects will be hydroelectric or nuclear? Just what did he have in mind?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, primarily they would be in the hydrocarbon field, but the province of Saskatchewan has indicated a very keen interest in the development of its uranium prospects and may, indeed, elect to have funds applied in that area. We would be very interested in discussing that.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR INQUIRY INTO OPERATIONS

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, the heat has been on in respect of more than one subject this weekend. I should like to ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether he will not reconsider his statement of last Thursday and ask for a public inquiry into the Unemployment Insurance Commission administration budget?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last Thursday, the administration budget of the Unemployment Insurance Commission was referred to the Estimates Committee earlier this year for study in detail. That administration budget as forecast then, will be met, and it will be reviewable when we go again before the standing committee of the House. Since I have great confidence in the chairman and the Unemployment Insurance Commission, I would not think it would be necessary to review that again except in the ordinary course of events.

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ENERGY

EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS ON OIL
SHARE TRADING—REQUEST FOR STUDY

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the huge profits made in the trading of oil shares last week, in the neighbourhood of \$1 million in Imperial Oil shares alone, and in view of the fact this is the third time in two months the government's handling of an energy announcement has caused erratic oil share trading on Canadian and United States markets, resulting in windfall profits to astute traders, has the minister requested that a study be made of the trading in such shares to determine whether this has been the result of leaks or illfounded statements from the government?

[Mr. Trudeau.]

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, so far this parliament has not given the government the authority to regulate securities; this is primarily a provincial matter. My own department is engaged in developing proposals for a federal role in the area, and I am glad to see what appears to be support from my hon. friend in this regard.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the fact that past handling of energy announcements has created erratic price fluctuations, affording professional traders an opportunity to make fortunes in the trading of oil shares, will the minister assure the House that the manner in which future announcements are conducted will lend itself to more orderly marketing? Specifically, how will he correct such unfortunate mistakes in the handling of government announcements?

● (1500)

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I cannot guarantee that the decisions of investors will be fully informed, but I would agree with the hon. gentleman that in general we should try to make announcements at least at a time when there is no trading on the market.

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MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—SUGGESTED INCREASE
IN ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. In view of the fact that the number of applications coming in from communities in connection with the Local Initiatives Program and the fact that the allocation of funds which has been announced does not meet even a small portion of projects as well as the fact this will destroy initiative and destroy the objectives of the program, is the minister considering or willing to consider increasing the amount available under this program?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand why that particular aspect is destructive of initiative or the objectives or criteria of LIP. If any further funds are considered, an announcement will be made in the usual manner.

Mr. Marshall: In view of the fact that advisory committees are having difficulties with the number of applications and they will have to turn down the greater portion of them, would the minister look at it from this light and consider increasing the funds?

Mr. Andras: I suppose this represents the outstanding success of the program generally.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andras: Incredible though it may be, each year that we have announced it and no matter how much money we