

*Petroleum and Gas Revenue Tax Act*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member. However, the Hon. Member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey) might like to think about the question over the next hour, and as there is still approximately ten minutes for questions and comments, he can answer the question when we come back.

[Translation]

Order please. It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** In view of the fact that the person who finished speaking is not in the House, I would like to recognize—

**Mr. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Baker) on a point of order.

**Mr. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to have some clarification; I think it would be helpful to the House. When a Member finishes speaking just before the clock reaches 1 p.m. and then does not re-enter the House at 2 p.m., and the time remaining in the question and comments period is nine minutes, is it the opinion of the Chair that comments cannot then be made concerning his speech? I understand Your Honour's point about questions, but I wonder whether Your Honour would make a ruling on comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Comments can be made, but we naturally cannot have anyone answering questions. If there are going to be comments made, I have no choice but to recognize the Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields), who had the floor, for comments only because there will not be any questions asked. I would like to recognize the Hon. Member for Athabasca who was, at that time, concluding his last comment.

**Mr. Shields:** Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your very wise ruling.

In the Member's address in the House he was taking exception to the fact that there was not a training component in the agreement being drawn up between the federal Government and the Government of Newfoundland with regard to sharing the offshore resources. I was trying to point out to the Hon. Member that the agreement is treating Newfoundland and its offshore resources, the Hibernia fields, in exactly the same way as the resources in the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan are treated by the federal Government and those provincial Governments. In my mind that puts New-

foundland on an equal footing with the Prairie provinces, the other oil-producing provinces in the country.

The onus is then on the provincial Government of Newfoundland to encompass the training and employment components in agreements granting drilling and development rights in Hibernia. In my view this puts much more persuasive power in the hands of the Newfoundland Government than it would otherwise. I wanted to know why the Hon. Member would not recognize this.

● (1410)

My other comment is that in Question Period yesterday and today I noticed that one Newfoundland Opposition Member of Parliament was questioning very strongly, and in fact condemning, the negotiations taking place between the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney) and her counterpart in Newfoundland. Given that the whole underlying theme of the negotiations and the impending agreement is to make Newfoundland equal to any other producing province in Canada, why would the Member not agree that this is the best approach? Surely, all provinces must be treated equally and fairly. That is what our Government is attempting to do.

**Mr. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the Hon. Member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey) during his speech on this Bill. One of his main points was that we, as Members of Parliament, do not have access to any of the information that is contained in that agreement. We do not even have access to the reports that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has concerning offshore oil development in Newfoundland.

The Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields) talked about jobs. That is why Members on this side in the Liberal Party have been attempting to have the Minister of Energy release a report which she has from Mobil Oil. She informs the House and Canadians that she cannot release the report until she knows what mode of development the Newfoundland Government wants.

The real reason why she will not release the report is that Mobil Oil talks about the number of jobs that will come to Newfoundlanders as a result of this development. I have it on very good authority that it will about equal the number of people who were laid off in the provincial Department of Highways over the past eight years because of automated equipment.

I remind the House that there is an average of 59,000 people in Newfoundland per month per year drawing unemployment insurance. There are 124,000 Newfoundlanders who filed for unemployment insurance in the past year.

The other point I want to make with respect to the hon. gentleman's speech concerns the fact that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources today announced an agreement with Newfoundland to provide additional support equipment, such as helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, for search and rescue operations on the offshore. The Minister stated today that there will be a second fixed-wing tracker aircraft sta-