

Oral Questions

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**INCOME TAX ACT****EXPEDITING OF AMENDMENTS AFFECTING 1972**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance a question about the bill to amend the Income Tax Act affecting those who are filing returns for 1972 and looking for refunds. Assuming that the ways and means motion is debated later this afternoon, I should like to ask the minister whether he would be prepared to confer with the House leader with a view to the bill being brought on for second reading tomorrow, having regard to its urgency. If he is prepared to do this, we would waive the requirement of notice for this purpose.

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): I will certainly do that.

• (1410)

INTRODUCTION OF WAYS AND MEANS MOTION ON CORPORATE TAX REDUCTION—METHOD OF ENACTING ACCELERATED DEPRECIATION PROPOSAL

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, regarding the proposed corporate tax reduction. Recognizing and accepting the importance of proceeding with the 1972 measures first, as the minister proposes to do, may I ask him when may we expect to see the notice of ways and means motion respecting the proposed corporate tax reduction?

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): That's better than you did last night, Bob.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to interrupt an extraneous conversation but I would like to say that, as I explained to the House last week, I would hope we could dispose of the 1972 matters before we introduce the 1973 matters. But here again I should like to consult my colleague, the leader of the House, first.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I do not see why the introduction of the ways and means motion would in any way interfere with our proceeding with the other matters first. I should like to ask the minister whether he can tell the House how he intends to proceed with the fast write-off provisions? Does he propose to bring the matter into the House at all and, if so, in precisely what form?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, as I explained when the question was put to me outside the House, the definition governing the regulations concern-

[Mr. L'Heureux.]

ing fast write-offs or accelerated capital cost allowance relates to manufacturing and processing, which happens to be the same definition that is relevant in the case of the corporate tax reduction, as the hon. gentleman knows. I felt that the House should have the opportunity to express its views on that issue. Whether or not I would exercise the option of bringing those forward by order in council, I have not yet determined, but I know the hon. gentlemen's views.

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ENERGY

POSSIBLE MEETING OF BRITISH COLUMBIA PREMIER AND MINISTER ON PROVINCIAL PROPOSAL THAT ALASKAN OIL BE TRANSPORTED BY RAIL

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. Has the right hon. gentleman received a telegram from Premier Barrett of British Columbia regarding the proposal of that government for transporting Alaskan oil and gas by rail to Lower Post, B.C. and then by underground pipeline to the United States? If so, may I ask the Prime Minister whether the telegram requests a meeting with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, has such a meeting been arranged and, if so, when and, if not, can the Prime Minister assure the House that such a meeting will be arranged?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would have to refresh my memory as to the existence or otherwise of a telegram to me. I do know that the subject was raised, but I am rather certain it was not in a telegram to me.

As regards the substance of the question of a meeting, I believe that my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, has indicated that he is prepared to discuss this topic. He has indicated, and I certainly agree with him, that any discussion would be more fruitful if he were able to know more about the proposal. In particular, he has asked for the background documents and research upon which this proposal has presumably been based.

INQUIRY AS TO DEPARTMENTAL STUDY OF FEASIBILITY OF RAIL TRANSPORT IN FAR NORTH

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Since the group at Queen's University have done a fairly exhaustive feasibility study on rail transport in the far north, and since Canadian National Railways has announced that it is undertaking an extensive study, may I ask the minister whether his department has set up any task force to make a study of rail transport in the far north, both as to the economics and as to the ecological feasibility of such a proposal similar to the advisory committee that he set up to study financing of a Mackenzie route pipeline?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, we have not set up an advisory committee but we have instituted a study to