

*Oral Questions***INDIAN AFFAIRS****SUGGESTION THAT QUEBEC'S BILL 1 CONFLICTS WITH BILL C-9 RATIFYING JAMES BAY AGREEMENT—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development? My question arises from statements made on behalf of the Cree and Inuit peoples that Bill 1, of the legislative assembly of the province of Quebec, is in direct conflict with Bill C-9, dealing with the James Bay Agreement, which was ratified a short time ago by this House. Has the minister obtained or requested a legal opinion on this issue?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, it is correct that the James Bay settlement gives the Cree and Inuit peoples the right to use their own languages as primary languages and English or French, according to their choice, as secondary languages. Whether Bill 1 contradicts the James Bay settlement is not yet clear.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): But that is the question, surely.

Mr. Allmand: Wait a minute. We are seeking advice on that subject.

Mr. Baldwin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since a decision of the Privy Council some time ago settled that the minister, acting on behalf of the government, has constitutional responsibility for the Cree and Inuit peoples, will the minister undertake, before Bill C-9 is given royal assent and the other bill is taken to a stage beyond recall, that he will refer this matter to a court of competent jurisdiction, so that it can be decided what those rights are?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if that will be necessary but I can assure this House that the federal government and my department will uphold the James Bay Agreement as written.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): This government is paralyzed.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, will the government uphold those rights, if necessary, to the extent of challenging the provisions of Bill 1 which may contravene the provisions of Bill C-9?

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): The government is paralyzed.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, we will take all measures to make sure the James Bay Agreement is put into operation.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: What about using the army?

[Mr. MacEachen.]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**ALLEGATION FINN REPORT CONDEMNNS FAILURE TO ENFORCE SAFETY REGULATIONS IN GRAIN ELEVATORS—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. Can the minister confirm that the Finn commission report, commissioned by him two years ago to investigate health and safety in west coast grain elevators following the death of five men in an October 1975 grain terminal fire, documents the failure of the federal labour department to enforce properly existing laws on health and safety regulations, particularly regarding grain dust and chemicals, and, if so, what is he doing to implement the recommendations of that report?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's suggestion is totally erroneous. Without doubt what happened was severely tragic. Immediately after it happened we appointed Dr. Finn, of the University of British Columbia, to compile a detailed report. In the meantime we have acted throughout these proceedings, with the co-operation of Henry Kancs, the head of the local union, and management, to implement the highest possible standard and have issued directives along that line. Dr. Finn's group has been studying the matter. When the report is available we will do what we did in the case of the Cape Breton mines, issue new directives in accordance with the latest advanced technology, to make sure that tragedies of that kind never again occur.

REASON FOR DELAY IN PUBLISHING FINN REPORT ON SAFETY IN GRAIN ELEVATORS

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): I am sure the minister has read the report. He said here in the House on April 20: "we have also appointed a commission headed by Dr. Finn of UBC." He went on to say "he will make detailed technical recommendations very shortly." I would like to ask the minister whether he can confirm that he has now had the report since last October 7, and some of the unions have had it for five months. I understand the companies also saw it several months ago. Can he confirm that and, if so, why has he not released it since he has had it for so long? What is he trying to hide?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): We do not have the final report. The hon. member may very well be dealing with the reports and findings of Dr. Finn. As he has progressed, naturally he has made his findings available to the parties who are co-operating with him to ensure the highest standards. As these findings and views are made known, it is in the interest of all parties and, I am sure, Dr. Finn's wish, that they receive them in a piecemeal fashion, so to say, so that action can be taken concurrently with the progress of the inquiry. We are not trying to hide the final document from anybody. In fact, the very method of procedure in this inquiry in letting the parties know about it is a negation of any unwarranted suggestions from the hon. member that we are trying to hide anything at all.