

Oral Questions

ing arrangement between Mr. Bell and Petro-Canada, whose Crown corporation was so well served by the budget he helped to prepare.

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THE BUDGET

INQUIRY WHETHER ANY EMPLOYEE OF CROWN CORPORATION PARTICIPATED IN PREPARATION

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Finance. Can he tell the House whether any official or employee of any other Crown corporation participated in the preparation of any aspect of the budget? If so, what Crown corporations, other than Petro-Canada, were involved?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Not to my knowledge, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, would the Minister of Finance confirm that fact? Could he inform himself and provide that information to the House of Commons?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Madam Speaker.

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SHIPBUILDING

PROPOSED MEETING WITH CANADIAN SHIPBUILDING AND SHIP REPAIR ASSOCIATION

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, my question is either for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce or the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. It concerns a long awaited meeting between the Canadian Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Association pursuant to its brief submitted about six months ago. Could either of these hon. gentlemen tell us at what departmental level this meeting will take place? Will the ministers be participating personally in view of the very serious concerns which the industry has raised concerning, for example, the Jones act, which prohibits Canadian vessels being sold in the United States, and in view of the other conditions which are eroding the Canadian shipbuilding industry?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, perhaps my colleague will answer the question because I believe it comes under his jurisdiction.

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, I met personally with the executive of the Canadian Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Association some weeks ago. I believe the association will be having its annual meeting in Ottawa over the next few days. There will be discussions at that time at the senior officials level.

Mr. MacKay: Madam Speaker, the minister will know that Canadian fishing companies are looking toward building

replacement vessels in the United States because these vessels can be moved there if and when Canadian companies find it expedient to move their operations to the United States. Is the minister planning to move quickly to remove some of these conditions which are eroding the future prospects of the Canadian shipbuilding industry?

Mr. Gray: Madam Speaker, we are looking very actively into these things and I will be working on them in consultation with my colleagues, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Minister of Transport.

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NORTHERN PIPELINES

NORMAN WELLS PROJECT—ALLEGED CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The National Energy Board recommendations on the proposed Norman Wells pipeline project in the Northwest Territories will be soon handed down to cabinet for a decision. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, while acting in its role as trustee for the interests of native people, also stands to benefit from one-third ownership of oil produced in the area if the project is approved. The government is also in charge of both the federal environmental assessment review panel and the national energy hearings. This constitutes an obvious conflict of interest.

Given this conflict of interest, how can the department, as trustee for native people, possibly represent the interest of the Dene Nation in a fair and reasonable manner? To ensure that the interests of the Dene Nation are given just and unbiased representation, I ask the minister if he will insist that this matter be brought before the House for a full debate prior to any cabinet decision on the Norman Wells project.

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Madam Speaker, may I just tell the hon. member that there are many native leaders to whom I have spoken who are very glad that the department has some say with respect to the rate of development north of 60, vis-à-vis our power to consider environmental hearings, issue permits and so on, and to more adequately stage that type of development in the interests of the native people. Within the native population itself, there are some who do not see this type of conflict in quite the same light as the hon. member does.

As for the question of bringing the matter before the House, I cannot answer that question right now but I can assure the hon. member that when the National Energy Board does make its decision, the matter will be thoroughly considered by cabinet and the concerns of the Dene with respect to the Norman Wells development will be made known in a full and objective fashion. I have already given that assurance to George Erasmus, head of the Dene Nation. In fact, the