

Oral Questions

environmental assessment of the Dempster link in an acceptable form before September 1 of this year?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and the Environment): Mr. Speaker, in fact the environmental assessment panel under Dr. Hill was given the mandate to include the Dempster link in its terms of reference. I expect its interim report—and I underline the word “interim”—before August 1, or on August 1. As I said in the statement which I made when the panel was set up, this initial report will be followed by a more thorough examination and details could be added to what would be environmental clearance if and when this is required. The panel will not necessarily terminate its work by August 1; it will give an interim report.

POSSIBILITY OF APPROVING ALCAN ROUTE PRIOR TO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF DEMPSTER PIPELINE

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Even on the basis of an interim report by August 1, is it the minister's position that the government may give a commitment to the Alcan route, an important part of which is the Dempster link, before receipt of an acceptable and thorough environmental assessment review of that link?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I suppose the discussion will be on words like “acceptable”. It is obvious that an environmental assessment report will identify the problems. Then, the work of putting in conditions which would overcome the problems could continue even after a decision is made. In other words, a decision can be made if something is “acceptable” on a given number of conditions, and this is the work which would continue.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

ALLEGED DIFFERENTIATION IN TREATMENT BY CUSTOMS BETWEEN FORCES PERSONNEL AND CIVILIANS

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Defence with, I hope, a side whistle to the beautiful ear of the Minister of National Revenue. Since Canadian customs is now using the practice of taking verbal declarations by Canadians returning to this country that their purchases abroad do not exceed \$50 within the allowed period, would the minister ensure that armed forces personnel be treated the same way instead of exactly the opposite?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, that was a sort of double-pronged question. Certainly, I will yield to my colleague the Minister of National Revenue.

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member without any hesitation that the armed forces are treated equally, and if we were ever

[Mr. Jarvis.]

sinnners in the past it was in giving them the chance of pre-clearance.

Mr. McCleave: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I do not know which way to direct my supplementary because I have seen some documents which state exactly the opposite of what the hon. lady said and I would not want to doubt her word. May I therefore put the question down for ten o'clock and send both ministers a copy of the telegram which has gone out from the Department of National Defence in Ottawa, which says—I hate to say this—exactly the opposite of what the hon. lady said.

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CONFEDERATION

TASK FORCE ON NATIONAL UNITY—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address my question to the Acting Prime Minister. Yesterday the Prime Minister announced a task force, but today, as I understood the Acting Prime Minister, though perhaps I got it wrong, he indicated that there were no written terms of reference. Am I correct that there are no written terms of reference?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): No, I did not say that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Brewin: Then, if there are terms of reference, will they be tabled in the House and perhaps made available through *Hansard*? Since the task force is supposed to be directed to the public as much as anybody, I think it is of the utmost importance that the terms of reference be made clear.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, it is my recollection that an order in council is required in order to establish the task force, and I will be happy to consider tabling that order in council.

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● (1440)

[Translation]

BILINGUALISM

REQUEST THAT REPORT BY FÉDÉRATION DES FRANCOPHONES HORS QUÉBEC BE MADE PUBLIC

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State.

Since the two-year study commissioned by the Secretary of State on the situation of Francophones outside Quebec has been completed and filed with the Secretary of State, I believe, can the minister tell us whether he is willing to give the public access to that report or study, for it seems, according to one newspaper which has already commented on it, that it does in fact represent fairly well the proposals or recommendations