

Oral Questions

document to which he has referred, in order to make sure he is not advancing something that is not contained within that document.

Mr. MacKay: I would like to make the same request of the Solicitor General and ask him what ongoing discussions are taking place with the attorneys general or solicitors general of the various provinces. I am seeking information as to whether, on this very interesting study, the provinces have been fully briefed and kept fully informed. I know there were brief discussions in Charlottetown. Is there more than one of these studies? Is there now one that supersedes or changes the first one?

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member can rest assured that there is no intention of taking over the QPP or the OPP at any time. Nor is there any indication that such is the intention of my ministry.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question on another point related to the same study. Can the minister indicate what the situation is with regard to the possible taking over of harbour policing functions by the RCMP, and the RCMP withdrawing from drug enforcement? Were those points also discussed with the provinces?

Mr. Blais: With regard to the taking over of port policing, I believe a bill has been introduced in this House relating to such a process. I see the Minister of Justice has some hesitation about that. I would have to look at the legislation that has been introduced. With reference to drug enforcement, that is a federal responsibility. It is an ongoing responsibility that we are not ready to give up.

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[Translation]

FINANCE**INQUIRY AS TO METHOD OF COMPENSATING QUEBEC FOR LOSS IN SALES TAX REVENUE**

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance.

In view of the sales tax issue opposing Ottawa to Quebec, the minister will agree with me that the time to juggle with words is long since past. Yesterday the right hon. Prime Minister committed himself formally to giving Quebec the money it would have received under the minister's proposal. To give credibility to the Prime Minister's statement, would the Minister of Finance now be prepared to explain to the House how Quebecers could receive this money, without going against the unanimous wish of the National Assembly?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister reiterated yesterday what I had myself stated last Friday, namely that we do not intend to penalize Quebecers just because the Quebec government absolutely

[Mr. Blais.]

refuses to come to an agreement with the federal government, even though I have made concessions on two occasions since my budget in order to find a common ground of understanding. It seems the Quebec government wants confrontation, and the Prime Minister has stated that we will take the necessary action to ensure that Quebecers are not victimized by the Quebec government's stubbornness. Eventually, if the provincial government does not change its mind and does not decide to cut the sales tax on all other goods by 2 per cent, as I suggested, we will advise.

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary.

I think it is clear that what the Prime Minister said yesterday is absolute nonsense. Can the Minister of Finance tell the House today how Quebecers will get that money? Under the circumstances, I ask the Minister of Finance, if he has some small measure of honour, to tell us how Quebecers can receive that money, so that they are not penalized, without violating provincial jurisdiction and the unanimous will of the National Assembly, and the minister knows what I mean.

Mr. Chrétien: I am glad, Mr. Speaker, to see that the hon. member agrees with the attitude we are adopting in saying that we will not penalize Quebecers. Our financial year started exactly one month and two days ago, which means that we have ten months and 28 days left in which to solve the problem before the end of the fiscal year.

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LABOUR RELATIONS**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TO SETTLE RADIO-MUTUEL STRIKE**

Mr. Irénée Pelletier (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour and in view of his absence to his parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Speaker, since Bill C-8, an Act to amend the Canada Labour Code, has already been passed by the House and the Senate, can the parliamentary secretary tell the House whether the Minister of Labour intends to implement as soon as possible that part of the act which allows the minister to impose a first collective agreement, and specifically in the case of the conflict at Radio-Mutuel, which has already dragged on for 16 months?

Mr. Jacques Olivier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, we have received representations from the two large Quebec unions asking us to intervene. We have also received the recommendations of our officials. The bill has been passed and the royal sanction given. All that remains to be done is to proclaim it law; when it has been so proclaimed, Mr. Speaker, we will see, but I do think we will solve the problem within the next few weeks.