

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Maine:—in which it is stated that a union can bring the federal government to its knees? If the minister agrees that this is a serious problem, would he take action by bringing this matter before the House before we are subjected to the tragic prospect of nonstop strikes in 1975?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as hon. members may be aware, there have been informal discussions with leaders of the business community, management and labour, with respect to the number of work stoppages we have had in 1974 and with the prospect in mind of talking together to try to find some more acceptable way of settling labour disputes in 1975. I think that there is some basis for optimism that this end can be achieved, but there is no doubt there will be problems in 1975 with respect to work stoppages and strikes.

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FINANCE

EXEMPTION OF SYNCRUDE FROM RESOURCE TAX— REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE PRIVATE DEAL AND MORE CONCESSIONS

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. The Minister, in reply to a question I put to him yesterday, stated that he had conferred with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources prior to the May and November budgets about exempting Syncrude from the budgetary provisions, but did not say when he informed the Syncrude partners of the exemption. Did the minister, prior to the budget, make a private deal with these oil companies, which have misled the government in the past, and is he now making promises of concessions before separate government studies are done as to actual costs of the project?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): There was no private deal involving the federal government. The deal was between the province of Alberta and the Syncrude partners. The undertaking I gave to the minister of finance of Alberta, Mr. Miniely, was that the tax regime then in place involving that particular project would not be affected.

Mr. Symes: The president of Imperial Oil has stated publicly that he is aware of these concessions that were made part of the budget. What specifically are the special tax concessions that the minister has promised, and will they apply to other oil sands projects as well?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): We are not talking about concessions; we are talking about the tax regime that existed when the Syncrude arrangement was signed.

Mr. Symes: Am I to understand that there are no other special provisions or tax concessions being contemplated for Syncrude?

Oral Questions

ENERGY

SYNCRUDE PROJECT—GOVERNMENT POSITION ON PROPOSAL TO TAKE PUBLIC CONTROL

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): I would ask a supplementary question. In view of the suspicion of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about the inflationary cost increase of the project, as claimed by Syncrude, and in view of Syncrudes desire to be able to charge world prices for the oil and have unlimited export rights, why does the government not undertake full public, or at least majority, control of this vital resource to protect Canadian interests?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): It is really a question of financial availability. What would be involved would be something in excess of \$1 billion for this particular operation, and we have some other priorities in this government at the same time.

SARNIA-MONTREAL PIPELINE—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF AGREEMENT ON CONSTRUCTION AND DATE OF COMPLETION

Mr. Jim Balfour (Regina East): My question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Given the minister's announcement early in January that an agreement was reached between the Interprovincial Pipeline Company and the government for the construction of the Montreal pipeline, is the minister in a position to table the agreement? When will construction begin, and when will the pipeline be in operation?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Legal advisers of the government and those of the company are in the process of completing negotiations of the detailed agreement. It is anticipated that if this can be achieved, the company will be going back to the National Energy Board to obtain approval to go ahead and, hopefully, to commence in the spring of this year. As to whether or not they would be able to complete construction by early December of 1975 or would go into the spring of 1976, that will depend on events.

Mr. Balfour: Is the minister advising the House and the country that, in fact, no agreement has been reached between Interprovincial Pipeline and the government regarding construction, contrary to early published reports in January?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): The agreement at that time was on the discussion of the principles involved. It was subject to the preparation of a detailed document which is now under negotiation.

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MANPOWER

NUMBER OF REJECTIONS OF REFERRALS BY CANADA MANPOWER—REASON FOR HIGH NUMBER OF JOB VACANCIES

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. A recent survey by the Ontario labour minis-