

*Oral Questions*ALASKA HIGHWAY PIPELINE—LIABILITY FOR COST OF
INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George—Peace River): I have a brief supplementary question for the minister. It concerns the proposals advanced by British Columbia to the federal government regarding a joint approach to the creation of the necessary infrastructure in the area of transportation, communications and community services.

Can the minister advise the House whether he perceives the pipeline agreement with the United States to be flexible enough to incorporate or to charge the cost for some of these infrastructures which are obviously required at this late date to the pipeline company or to the end users of the product flowing through the pipeline?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I would have to repeat part of the answer already given, that in each case there are obviously certain installations or a certain infrastructure which will be required by the pipeline company, and in that case it would be chargeable to the pipeline company.

I believe what was contemplated in the question put earlier was federal assistance to British Columbia in order to undertake certain projects which might not be directly related to the requirements of the pipeline company. In cases of that kind, of course, it would not be possible to have these expenditures charged directly to the pipeline company.

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[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

USE OF MINI-COMPUTERS IN NORTHWEST QUEBEC—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Following abundant correspondence on the installation of a model SRI mini-computer to improve the processing of applications for unemployment insurance and reduce delays—it now takes as long as two months to study some applications—the minister indicated to me that the decision to supply northwest Quebec with such a mini-computer depends on the merging of the unemployment insurance office with the manpower centre. In addition, he indicated that he must first assess the results of the test area of Hull before reaching a decision. Can he tell the House today whether, after two years of study, he has come to a conclusion with regard to the test project in Hull? If not, when does he expect that study to be completed?

[English]

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, no one can deny that additional computers would help to expedite the claims that are filed at the present

[Mr. MacEachen.]

time. I think we have a splendid record in that respect. Sometimes errors are made by the applicant, and sometimes they are made by our departmental officials. I would like to see the kind of thing the hon. member is recommending used in other regions of the country. It is a case of setting priorities, seeing the extent to which they can be used and the amount of money available to give that kind of service.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, since the minister indicated in his written replies that it was a question of merging the unemployment insurance office with the manpower centre, can he tell the House whether that agreement has been reached in northwest Quebec and when the two offices will be combined?

[English]

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the personnel who work in the various offices, we want to proceed carefully and cautiously so as not to upset the personnel we have there. We want their morale to remain high. We also want to put offices where they will be most effective. There is a whole series of questions of this nature to be determined before we determine where the mini-computers should be placed.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated it was a question of budget and that the regional office for the province of Quebec, that is the Montreal office, is willing to cede to northwest Quebec that part of the budget now allotted to it. Those additional funds would enable northwest Quebec to have a mini-computer. Is the minister willing to make a decision immediately seeing the funds have been allotted and can be transferred?

● (1427)

[English]

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that the decision would be made immediately, but I can assure the hon. member that we are doing everything we can to bring first-class service to the people in that particular region.

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NATIONAL SECURITY

DESTRUCTION OF RCMP SURVEILLANCE REPORTS

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth—Wilmot): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General: it relates to the two years of missing documents covering the period when the present Minister of Supply and Services was solicitor general. At various times yesterday the Solicitor General indicated that documents were destroyed, later he qualified that by saying they were presumably destroyed, and even later he said there was no certificate of destruction and, therefore, a great deal of uncertainty. Has the Solicitor General determined whether, in