

Prime Minister inform the House whether the Government intends to introduce a resolution in Parliament, in accordance with Section 43(b) of the Constitution Act, 1982, concerning amendments with respect to the use of French and English in certain provinces?

Finally, could the Prime Minister inform the House whether he intends to go to court, to the Supreme Court of Canada, to determine the exact implications of Section 23 of the Manitoba Act?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member accurately pointed out the two avenues that are open to the Government, the first being a constitutional resolution, anticipating one by Manitoba. The Hon. Member will recall that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) stated that this was an option we would consider seriously. The Hon. Member is, of course, aware that such a resolution would also have to be adopted by Manitoba. In any event it is an option we are considering. The other alternative is to go before the Supreme Court. In any case, this option will probably be taken because the Bilodeau case is now before the Supreme Court, and the federal Government will want to take part in the discussion. We may therefore decide to opt for one or the other or perhaps for both. This is a matter I intend to put before Cabinet in a week or two, as soon as possible, and I will be happy to give the Hon. Member further details should he so request at a later date.

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#### MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

##### QUEBEC MUNICIPALITIES—NEGOTIATIONS OF AGREEMENT ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The Minister is aware that 1,250 Quebec municipalities are very anxious to hear the federal Government's decision on this agreement which has been pending for well over a year, and I am referring to an agreement under which municipalities would be able to receive federal grants, a federal-provincial agreement, of course. Could the Minister inform the House today, and I have discussed the matter with him before, whether officials on both sides are now agreed on the principle and whether the Canadian Government will be able to announce very shortly that an agreement will be signed?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe we are very close to an agreement. Talks among senior officials took place last week, and there is still a slight difference of opinion. I am writing to the Quebec Minister to prepare our final policy, but, as the Hon. Member is aware, there is a new Minister in the Provincial Cabinet, namely, Mr. Marcoux, and I intend to write to

him today or tomorrow. I expect to receive an answer as soon as possible.

##### REQUEST FOR CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF SIGNING OF AGREEMENT

**Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister and a number of Quebec Members are aware of the importance of this question. Could the Minister give the House the assurance that he will do everything in his power to have this agreement signed before the opening of the Quebec National Assembly's session, considering the fact that the municipalities are very concerned about Bill 38 which has been tabled in the National Assembly? In the circumstances, could the Minister confirm, and I am sure millions of Quebecers will be overjoyed, that he will do what he can to have this agreement signed before the provincial session resumes?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I will do my best to take action as soon as possible, as soon as next week, if the Government of Quebec agrees with the latest proposals I intend to send them tomorrow. It is up to the Province of Quebec to say it agrees! However, with a new Minister, I am not sure they will be as keen as we are. However, I will personally do my best. From tomorrow on, it will be up to the Government of Quebec.

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● (1450)

[English]

#### CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

##### PRICE OF GASOLINE—REPORTED EFFECT OF MONOPOLY

**Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough):** Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my attention, and to the attention of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, that major oil company refineries, including Petro-Canada, are collectively setting prices at the refinery gates by signing 15 year reciprocal contracts with each other. As well, the refineries are signing agreements with retailers which will allow the refineries to set the retail price of gas at the pumps in return for a guaranteed profit.

I wonder if the Minister would confirm today's story on Broadcast News which quotes a national automotive trade association report as stating that Canadian motorists are paying 6 cents per litre, or 27 cents per gallon, too much, because of monopoly in the retail of gasoline, which is getting worse as the days go on.

**Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I have not heard the broadcast so I cannot confirm or deny the statement. I will take every opportunity to examine the truth of the statement, however. In the meantime I would advise the Hon. Member that an inquiry