

Oral Questions

FINANCE

FORTHCOMING BUDGET—MINISTER'S SPEECH IN CALGARY

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I will try to change the tone. I rise as a humble and insignificant opposition backbencher.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Waddell: I suppose that is better than being called a nobody, as said by the previous Government.

I wish to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs who is sitting next to that heavyweight to his left. Yesterday he confirmed in Calgary that the first Tory budget of this administration will encourage foreign investment, and that the Government is considering the elimination of the 25 per cent Crown share in federal lands. Would the Minister tell the House the position of the U.S. Government on the privatization of the Crown share by giving a preference to Canadian companies?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member would have to ask the United States Government.

MINISTER'S VIEW

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, could the Prime Minister tell the House whether he has discussed this change with the U.S. Government and, if not, does he personally take the view that this change should be discussed with the Americans before the Government makes a final decision? He has expressed this view in the past. Is this still his present view?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I don't know how long it takes the Hon. Member to catch up with events, but the Right Hon. Member for Manicouagan is the Prime Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I think it would be prudent for the Government of Canada, when we are enacting legislation, to have some idea of the reaction that would come from either private investors or Governments in other countries. But I make the point that while we might seek some indication as to the reaction of other Governments, this Government of Canada takes Canadian decisions here, ourselves, and in the Canadian interest, no other interest.

● (1440)

ENERGY

PETROLEUM GAS REVENUE TAX

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. On March 28 it was a great day for Canada, the day the Western Accord was signed. There is one major highlight. The PGRT, the Petroleum Gas Revenue Tax, will not apply to new production commencing on or after April 1, 1985. Does this mean that the PGRT will not apply to any new production, including reserves that were shut in prior to March 28 and may come on stream or be produced after April 1?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, the revisions to the PGRT were designed to create activity in the oil patch to provide new jobs and new exploration. Having said that, I can tell the Hon. Member that there is a working group under the aegis of the Minister of Finance that is taking a look at regulations to govern the new petroleum and gas revenue tax, and this group will be giving its report to this House in due course.

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FINANCE

FORTHCOMING BUDGET—MINISTER'S CALGARY SPEECH

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri-Westmount): Mr. Speaker, following on the question from the Member for Vancouver-Kingsway, can the Minister of Finance tell us whether he authorized the Secretary of State to make these budget disclosures to the Chamber of Commerce in Calgary, or is this just another example of sloppy disregard for the budgetary process?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, maybe I could read the sentence that gave rise to the headline in *The Globe and Mail* today. It reads: "Our first major initiative was to replace FIRA and Michael Wilson's budget will continue the encouragement of enterprise and investment". It was two separate thoughts combined into one to make a headline.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, with that I think I should go to the Prime Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Benjamin: I wish you would.