

That offer still stands. It seems to me the best way to achieve the good results the hon. member has in mind is to create an atmosphere which will make it possible to begin these discussions and to reach a conclusion satisfactory to both sides. Until that happens it does not seem to me that the hon. member can have his concerns entirely removed.

Mr. Gustafson: Madam Speaker, again my question is for the Minister of Finance. The situation in Saskatchewan is so serious that rigs are leaving, service rigs are facing problems and there are no new contracts for the new year. We must have some immediate action in Saskatchewan and in western Canada. Will the minister reconsider his position? Will he bring in a new budget or a mini-budget? Will he jolt his colleague into action?

Mr. MacEachen: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is speaking about the province of Saskatchewan and tomorrow I shall have an opportunity, at a meeting of finance ministers, to discuss the situation in Saskatchewan with the minister for that province, as well as with ministers from other provinces. I will check with him my own impressions that the prospects for economic growth in Saskatchewan are very strong. The growth in that province has been strong in the past year, and from what I know the growth in 1981 in the province of Saskatchewan will be among the best of any province in the whole country.

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FINANCE

MEASURES TO ASSIST ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal): Madam Speaker, my question is for the member of Parliament from Atlantic Canada who is responsible for the portfolio of finance. As the minister is aware, the Economic Council of Canada, since the budget, has revised its forecast of inflation from 10 per cent to 11.4 per cent. Since the minister's party has taken office the value of the dollar has declined by at least 5 per cent. The minister knows that every drop in the dollar adds four-tenths of 1 per cent to the cost of living, which is about an increase of 2 per cent altogether since they have taken office. Interest rates continue to soar. It is said that a 1.5 per cent increase in bank interest rates adds 4½ cents to the cost of a pound of pork and 1½ cents to the price per pound of beef—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The preamble to the hon. member's question is rather long and it has been made by several other members. It is all right to hear it once, but after that hon. members should restrain themselves. Could the hon. member come to his question, please?

Mr. Corbett: Madam Speaker, you can rest assured that Canadians are interested in what beef, pork and eggs will cost them.

The hon. member from Atlantic Canada should know that Atlantic Canadians have the lowest per capita income in the

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nation. My question is: In view of the fact that Atlantic Canadians like to eat, what will the Minister of Finance do to ease the crushing burden which Atlantic Canadians are facing today and to get them back into the work place?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I refer the hon. member to the budget—

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. MacEachen:—which was put before the House on October 28 and which, in my judgment, was probably the most favourable budget to the Atlantic provinces ever introduced. If the hon. member could possibly remove those partisan blinkers, he would recognize the value of that budget to the Atlantic provinces.

Mr. Corbett: Madam Speaker, I point out to the minister that Atlantic Canadians have the highest unemployment as a result of that budget. These are his own people and we are talking about a meat-and-potatoes issue in Atlantic Canada. What meat-and-potatoes action does the minister plan to take to help Atlantic Canadians face a very bleak winter?

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CANADA LABOUR CODE

VALIDITY OF REFERENCING OF ONTARIO LEGISLATION— PROTECTION OF URANIUM MINERS

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. It is not the question of which I gave him notice earlier today; I thought he would like to know the difference between the two.

Given the fact that the Ontario select committee on hydro affairs has suggested that the referencing of Bill 70, the Ontario health and safety act, to part IV of the Canada Labour code has no legal validity and that the report recommends this practice be tested in the courts within three months, can the minister tell this House if the opinion expressed by the counsel for the Ontario select committee is shared by his advisers? If this is indeed the case, does the minister agree that Ontario's uranium miners have only the goodwill of the company to protect them and no legal recourse to enforce health and safety regulations?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, the hon. member will, of course, recognize that the question of the validity of the referencing or of any other legal action by the government is a matter which does not fall under my jurisdiction but that of the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Blackburn: Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. Is the minister intending to follow one of the recommendations of the Ontario committee on hydro affairs which would give the AECB the power to impose penalties and bring prosecutions, thus ensuring that all uranium miners in Canada have occupational health and