

Privilege—Mr. McInnes

SALES TAXES—MINISTER'S POSITION

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance whose tax reform proposals continue his practice of assaulting the pocketbooks of middle and low-income Canadians, all in the name of fairness. Will the Minister explain to those Canadians whom he has burdened with the load of new, unreformed sales taxes, where is the fairness for them in a system whereby any reduction in income tax is followed by an increase in sales tax?

• (1500)

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I presume from the Hon. Member's question that she is referring to the sales tax reforms which, I understand, her Party feels are necessary because of the bad tax system we have in the existing federal sales tax. The fairness comes in because there will be a significantly enlarged refundable sales tax credit paid to low and lower middle-income Canadians in advance and on a regular basis. In addition, the surtaxes for all Canadians will be removed and there will be further income tax reductions for middle-income earners. So there is a good deal of fairness in this package which will be part of Phase Two.

EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Miss Aideen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has said that as a result of last Thursday's budget 850,000 low-income people will be removed from the tax rolls, but he failed to say that since 1985 his policies have added nearly a million Canadians to the tax rolls. According to the Minister's own figures, now a couple with two children will begin paying tax at well below \$20,000 a year annual income and a single person begins paying income tax at \$6,400. Will the Minister not admit that his policies are designed to keep the poor, poor?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, that is why we made these changes, to remove 850,000 Canadians from the tax rolls. The Hon. Member has missed one key point. One of the reasons there are more taxpayers today is because there are 840,000 people in a better position to pay tax. They have a job which they did not have in 1984.

Mr. Speaker: I want to advise Hon. Members that this will be the last question before the end of Question Period.

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NATIONAL PARKS

SOUTH MORESBY—COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND BRITISH COLUMBIA PREMIER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for national parks. Last

Wednesday here in the House the Prime Minister promised to use every possible lever to obtain the co-operation of the Government of British Columbia in setting aside South Moresby as a national park reserve. As of an hour ago, the Premier of British Columbia has publicly indicated that he has had no contact with the Government of Canada regarding South Moresby. Could the Minister bring the House up to date as to why there has not been any contact between the Government of Canada or between the Prime Minister and the Government of British Columbia to this point?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Skeena is correct in saying that it was the intent of the Prime Minister of Canada to call the Premier of British Columbia about the South Moresby question. I can confirm that the Prime Minister intends to do so. He may well have made his call even as I speak.

I will be talking to the Prime Minister later today to check whether the call has been made—and I expect it will have been made—after which I will brief the Hon. Member and any other interested Member on the results which may flow from the conversation if it has taken place.

WESTERN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FUND

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): My supplementary question is directed to Deputy the Prime Minister. It was reported earlier today as well that because there is no new money in the Western Development Initiative Fund that may be a part of the reason there is a delay in getting the co-operation of the Province of British Columbia. Could the Deputy Prime Minister advise the House whether or not linkage has been made between the Western Development Fund and the \$106 million proposed for the national park reserve in South Moresby?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to comment on speculative reports at this particular of time.

Mr. Speaker: I want to advise Hon. Members that I have received from the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) notice of a question of privilege which may take a few minutes. I have also just received a note from the Hon. Minister of Public Works that he wishes to rise on a point of personal privilege. I understand it would be acceptable to the House if we heard the Minister first.

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PRIVILEGE

CODE OF CONDUCT—ALLEGED BREACH

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, on my appointment to the Cabinet in August 1985, I established a blind trust and appointed McLeod Young Weir