

Mr. Sharp: As the Prime Minister said yesterday or the day before, Mr. Speaker, the whips are off of members on all sides of the House including the government. I am telling my hon. friend, however, I do not think there is any doubt about the position of members of the government who I believe will voluntarily support this bill.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO THOSE PRESENTING NATIVE LAND CLAIMS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Since he has now left the chamber, I will direct it to his parliamentary secretary. If an answer is not available, I hope my question will be taken as notice. In view of the very short time remaining before the negotiations into the cutoff lands claims in British Columbia begin, has the minister given any consideration to appointing a coordinator to assist in providing information to those arguing the Indian claim, information that can only be obtained from the files and archives of the department?

Mrs. Iona Campagnolo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the minister will be meeting next week with Mr. Williams, the British Columbia minister with responsibility for Indian affairs. I believe this is one of the items on their agenda.

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FISHERIES

DAMAGE TO GEAR IN NOVA SCOTIA—ADEQUACY OF COMPENSATION

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of State (Fisheries). In view of the fact that the equipment of several fishermen on the Bay of Fundy coast has been so damaged that without virtually full compensation they will be unable to finance a return to their livelihood, is the minister satisfied that the compensation under existing regulations will permit them to return to the profession of their choice?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of State (Fisheries)): Mr. Speaker, since the disaster formula has been in effect in relation to federal-provincial co-operation in cases of this type, it has applied to fishermen in other parts of the country. I think it has applied with some equity. I am certainly hopeful that these damages will be fully covered.

Mr. McCain: In view of the fact that the advertising on this subject indicates the regulations will only permit fishermen to be reimbursed on the depreciated value of their equipment, will the minister investigate and see if in his opinion in this inflationary period this is adequate so that these fishermen may return to their profession?

Oral Questions

Mr. LeBlanc (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, I am certainly willing to look into any suggestions of the hon. member. The fact is the formula is well known. It was adopted by the provinces and the federal government. As I said, it has worked for fishermen in other parts of the country in the past.

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ENERGY

ALBERTA OIL SANDS—GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO ENSURE CONSTRUCTION OF EXTRACTION PLANTS

Mr. Peter C. Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Is he aware that plans to construct future plants in the Alberta oil sands are at a standstill or shelved indefinitely? Will he say whether the government really expects those plants to be built? If so, what does he intend to do to see that they are built as originally programmed?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, one of the most important things we can do is get on with the Syncrude project and prove its viability. I very much hope we will be able to conclude the lease arrangements in particular with the province of Alberta at a very early date.

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FINANCE

ALLEGED INCREASE IN FUTURE OIL IMPORTS—EFFECT ON BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Mr. Peter C. Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my supplementary to the Minister of Finance. Is the minister aware that the situation is getting worse daily and it now appears that by 1985 some 60 per cent of Canada's oil will have to be imported, costing our country between \$15 million and \$20 million a day? What effect will this have on our balance of payments? Also, does the minister intend to take any initiatives or will he leave this until after the next election and let the new Conservative government solve the problem?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the last remarks of the hon. member put his question into the realm of fantasy.

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FISHERIES

FREEDOM OF FISHERMEN IN LAKE WINNIPEG AREA TO SELL CATCH—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Dean Whiteway (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State (Fisheries). It has to do with a matter that is critical to the whole area of inland fisheries and in particular to the Lake Winnipeg area. In view of the fact that the fishermen are locked in not only under a licencing system but also a quota system, is the minister having discussions with the province to allow these fishermen the option of selling outside the corporation area, similar to the Lake of the Woods area of Ontario?