

Oral Questions

does the government intend to take regarding this very serious matter?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has raised two separate questions. The first deals with flooding on the Great Lakes. Both sides in the International Joint Commission had to recognize that it is very difficult to do much about excessive rainfalls. The water all has to pass through the St. Lawrence. Therefore it is impossible to deal with that problem except by regulating the level of the water in the various lakes. With regard to the second question, I was talking today to the chairman of the Canadian section of the International Joint Commission who gave me an account of the talks. While the Canadian government is not altogether satisfied with the progress being made by the United States in cleaning up the Great Lakes, at least progress is being made and there is good will on both sides.

[Later:]

Mr. Jelinek: My supplementary is to the Acting Prime Minister. On October 17, 1973, I asked the Minister of the Environment if adequate staffing and funding would immediately be provided for the proposed cleanup and control of flood levels of the Great Lakes, to which he gave this House his assurance. According to spokesmen in two different International Joint Commission offices in Ontario, this has not been the case. I therefore ask whether the government is still planning to take immediate action, as promised by the minister, or if in fact it is thinking of nullifying the Great Lakes water quality agreement?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as far as I understand the situation, Canada is fully up to date in carrying out the agreement with the United States. The United States is having some difficulty in funding its operation. I do not think it is lack of staff on the part of Canada that is causing any of these difficulties.

* * *

COMMEMORATION

INQUIRY AS TO POSSIBILITY OF EVENTS TO HONOUR
MACKENZIE KING, ARTHUR MEIGHEN AND J. S. WOODSWORTH

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Secretary of State I will direct my question to the acting minister. Considering that this year, 1974, marks the centenary of the birth of three outstanding statesmen and leaders of three historic parties, Right Hon. Mackenzie King, Right Hon. Arthur Meighen and Reverend J. S. Woodsworth, can the acting minister advise if the government has in mind any commemorative events honouring the careers of these distinguished Canadians who brought honour and distinction to this House and much greatness and credit to this country?

Mr. Speaker: I have the impression this question might have been placed on the order paper, but perhaps the minister might reply briefly.

[Mr. Jelinek.]

PENITENTIARIES

POLICY RESPECTING VISITS BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, in view of the hide and cover attitude of the government regarding Ontario grand juries, as expressed last week, may I ask the Solicitor General if he has issued instructions or if there is a government policy which would prevent individual members of parliament on their own initiative from entering into and inspecting federal government institutions?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): No, Mr. Speaker. It is the policy of the penitentiary service and my department to permit entry of members of parliament during regular periods. However, when there are disturbances we have to regulate this because we cannot have an extremely large number of people, whether it be press or members of parliament. But in usual periods of time we permit members of parliament at any time.

* * *

ENERGY

SUBMISSION OF BILL C-18 TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS
FOR APPROVAL

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources a question that may help us in the debate on Bill C-18 which is to commence today. Was this bill presented to the provincial premiers and governments for their approval? This bill, of course, arises from the agreement between the federal and provincial governments. Has the federal government received the total approval of the ten provincial governments with regard to all the terms and conditions?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): As the hon. member knows, Mr. Speaker, the general principles involved in the bill were the subject of an agreement between the first ministers on March 27. As the hon. member also knows, it is not in accordance with the practice of the House to circulate a bill outside the Privy Council before it receives first reading in the House.

● (1500)

Mr. Woolliams: I have one supplementary question arising from the fact that this bill is the result of an agreement between the federal government and the provincial governments concerning the export tax and setting the price of crude petroleum and its by-products. Am I to understand from the minister's answer that neither he nor the government have made any attempt to obtain from the provinces an acknowledgment that the bill embodies the terms and conditions of the agreement made at that time?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): The terms and conditions reached as a result of that conference have been incorporated in this bill. The bill is a public document for the first ministers examination and as far as I know no exception has been taken to its terms.