

Indians to participate in such a project, and we are fully behind this action.

Mr. Waddell: Madam Speaker, when one reads the letter with regard to what Mr. Shirt has said about Indian mortality being four times higher than the provincial average, native people in alcohol treatment institutions and the lack of economic development on the reserves, one begins to understand what the native people are talking about when they speak of aboriginal rights and what they mean to their future.

The House of Commons Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works visited the tar sands this summer and made a report to this House. I am surprised that the minister is not familiar with that report, which recommended in items five and six that the federal government "maximize native involvement in the tar sands and . . . the formation of a body involving native, government, corporate and labour interests". The committee further recommended that there be adequate native participation in the development of these resources.

The minister mentioned Petro-Canada and Nova, but there are other projects—the Alsands project, the Cold Lake project, the Imperial Oil project and so on. Will the minister tell this House whether or not he is in agreement with the unanimous recommendations of the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works?

Mr. Lalonde: I would be quite willing to try to set up such a committee, but obviously, once more, if the government of Alberta would not wish to co-operate, we would run into very serious difficulties and put in jeopardy the efficacy of such a committee. I am quite willing to look at the recommendations to which my hon. friend has referred. I hope that we will have the support of all other parties concerned in order to set up such a committee.

Mr. Waddell: Madam Speaker, a final supplementary. It is not good enough, in our view, to lay the blame on the provincial government or for the provincial government to lay the blame on the federal government. The minister gave \$40 million to Imperial Oil, for which I called him the "\$40 million Marc". Is the minister prepared to consider giving some money to the native people in the area of the tar sands with the same speed which he gave money to Imperial Oil, so that these people can prepare for future involvement in the tar sands projects?

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I remind the hon. member that the money which has been advanced to Imperial Oil was in order to keep the project alive. If the project is not kept alive, the Indians would have nothing in which to participate even if they wished to. It is very important to put it into perspective and to realize that the first condition to any Indian participation is that the project proceed. And before that can happen, as my hon. friend knows, we need the co-operation of the government of Alberta. It is not a question of attributing blame; it is a question of making sure that all parties con-

cerned will take the necessary steps to ensure that the project proceeds.

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WESTERN DEVELOPMENT FUND

ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Madam Speaker, I direct my supplementary question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, who is responsible for the western development fund. Considering the deplorable economic and social conditions which prevail among Canadian Indians in the west, including Alberta, and the fact that those Alberta Indians do not benefit at all from the Alberta heritage fund, would the minister indicate whether any of the \$4 billion in the western development fund which was announced in the budget will be allocated to assist Indian economic development in the west?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the development of that western initiative is being considered at the present time by cabinet. Once a series of options have been developed, we intend to have discussions with provincial government officials and different interest groups in western Canada. Economic development for native people in western Canada is being examined and, considering the tremendous wealth being generated from our resources, I personally think it would make good sense to recycle much of that revenue to help those people in western Canada who need help the most, namely, the native people.

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INDUSTRY

INCENTIVES TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. More than a month ago I asked the minister if he would give serious consideration to introducing productivity incentives, to be paid in direct proportion to increases in industrial productivity, as a means of correcting the very serious drop in productivity which has taken place in Canada this year, a drop from an average increase of 4 per cent to a decrease of 3 per cent. The minister said he would give this matter serious consideration. Would he now advise the House of the result of that consideration, and can we expect him to announce a program of industrial incentives to be introduced in the very near future?

● (1430)

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, we are continuing our work on this. As I said when I answered my hon. friend a few weeks ago, this matter is worthy of serious consideration. When we are