

Oral Questions

the Yukon that the appointment of the next commissioner of the Yukon will be made by, and with the advice and consent of, that elected majority?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we will be looking for the best possible commissioner, and in that we will be influenced and advised by the people of the Yukon who are the ultimate sovereigns in that part of the jurisdiction.

Mr. Nielsen: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister kindly answered the first part of my question but refrained from answering the second part, which was: will the appointment be made with the consent of that elected majority?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, because they are a reasonable group of men and women, I am sure they will consent to anything reasonable that is done by the government.

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LABOUR RELATIONS**ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTIPARTITE NATIONAL FORUM TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS**

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. It was, and continued to be for some time, the first plank in the former minister of labour's policy to establish a multipartite national forum which would include labour, business and other community groups. May I ask the minister whether this is still the policy of the government and, if it is, what progress has been made recently toward this objective?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Martin O'Connell (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the House for this very warm welcome and expression of good wishes; I do appreciate it.

So far as the question goes, Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say that a good deal of progress has already been made toward consultation. It began less in the form of a large forum, but it is growing in the form of consultation, working its way up through the 23 sector task forces into the second tier committee. Both business and labour have made very excellent proposals for policy development to the two levels of government. Therefore, we are working at this coming up, rather than starting with a large new structure. We are working toward it, and I think all would recognize that very significant progress is being made and I would seek to continue that.

Mr. Fraser: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I take it from what the minister says that the policy remains an objective; the procedure in obtaining it has been somewhat changed. May I ask the minister this: recently the acting minister of labour said in the other place that the Woods royal commission report advocating the establishment of a public interest disputes commission was under active study by the

[Mr. Nielsen.]

government. A few days later the right hon. Prime Minister seemed to indicate that that was not so.

In view of the fact that I am sure all hon. members would not want this place to become a constant labour court, can the minister advise whether the acting minister, who said that the Woods royal commission public interest disputes commission proposal was under study, is correct and, if so, is the minister prepared to make a statement in the House in order to indicate what structure the government may be prepared to establish at least to diminish the number of strikes that this House has to settle?

Mr. O'Connell: Of course, Mr. Speaker, the question of bringing about labour peace and stability will be one of the first questions to which I would wish to address myself.

So far as the specific question of the study goes, I personally have studied the Woods task force proposal with respect to the public service public interest disputes commission. I would have to say that, whereas we do need to look further at that issue, it is not the answer because that commission would, after it had done what is suggested of it, in effect dump the question back into this parliament. So we would not be relieving ourselves of activities in settling disputes simply by going to some new kind of commission.

I personally will be reviewing that, as I have done recently. I would like to discuss the matter with the critic from the opposite side because I think we on all sides of the House would be deceiving ourselves if we thought some new commission which nobody takes the trouble to really examine would resolve these issues for us: they would come back here, Mr. Speaker.

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FORESTRY**ALLEGED DEPLETION OF FORESTRY SERVICES**

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, against the great losses to the Canadian treasury that have been revealed in the report of the Auditor General, and against the news last night that his department is losing some very highly trained and well motivated public servants, I wonder whether the minister is now prepared to admit that he is presiding over the demise of the Canadian Forestry Service.

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Environment)): That is ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marchand: The Canadian Forestry Service is a very important part of my department.

Mr. Fraser: What about the forestry labs, especially the Vancouver one?

Mr. Marchand: The forestry labs are, also. The privatization of those labs will be one of the most forward steps taken