

that is not a serious option at the present time because of low volume gas discoveries. Would the minister confirm that that is his opinion, and if it is, is the minister not pre-judging both the Berger Report and the NEB report, which he has criticized other hon. members for doing?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I think many Canadians have observed that the threshold volumes in the Mackenzie Delta are not sufficient to justify an all-Canadian pipeline at the present time. Indeed, I have had discussions with various members of the industry, including proponents of the Maple Leaf of the Foothill line from the Mackenzie south, and they have indicated to me that they have not seen those threshold volumes either. I do not want to speculate further as to whether they have completely abandoned that particular proposal; that is for them to say before the NEB. I have noted, however, that they have been placing increasing stress on the other proposal they put before the NEB, the Alcan proposal.

ALLEGED LACK OF GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO SOLAR ENERGY

Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and it concerns the government's failure to bring forward a comprehensive energy policy. I refer specifically to a report released last week which was financed by the Department of Supply and Services and which stated that there has been no clear, unequivocal commitment by the government to solar energy. I wonder if the minister will tell the House whether he agrees with the recommendation in the report for a vastly increased solar energy effort, and if so, what concrete steps is the minister planning in the near future?

● (1430)

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the particular report to which the hon. member is referring but I take issue with him when he says we have no comprehensive energy policy. I will send him a copy and perhaps he will read it and give us the benefit of his conclusions. As to the question of solar energy and its place in Canada, I agree that it is a very important source of energy. We are significantly funding demonstration projects all across the country. We have increased very materially our support for energy research and development and the demonstration of solar energy in Canada.

Mr. Neil: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. If there is a comprehensive policy on energy I am sure hon. members on this side of the House would like to see it. Last week the minister told the House that the United States energy policy was merely a copy of his own. I might say it is a measure of the achievement of the Carter administration to adopt a policy which does not really exist. With regard to the U.S. federal public building program that includes a clear commitment to make use of solar energy in the heating of public buildings, I

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wonder if the minister will advise whether we have a similar policy for our government buildings and if not, why not?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, at the present time we are looking at two specific proposals which would involve federal government buildings.

POSSIBILITY OF DELAYING NEGOTIATIONS ON SALE OF NUCLEAR REACTORS IN VIEW OF DECISION AT SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister and relates to the actions of the government in relation to the decisions and conclusions which came from the Economic Summit Conference in London at the weekend. One of the decisions in which Canada took part and obviously wholeheartedly agreed with was for a two-month "urgent study" to determine how best to prevent the proliferation of weapons and materials for nuclear weapons and indeed the whole question of nuclear power reactors throughout the world. As a result of that, has the government issued a directive to all government departments and agencies to immediately cease and desist any further negotiations or dealings in regard to fissionable materials, nuclear reactors or similar equipment and if not, why not?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will realize that the Downing Street summit not only referred to the risks of nuclear proliferation and undertook a commitment to study on an urgent basis the question of safeguards but it also underlined the need to use nuclear energy to meet the world's energy requirements. There are those two aspects to the London conclusion. The direct answer to the hon. gentleman's question is no.

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

POSSIBILITY OF BANNING PAYMENT OF SECRET COMMISSIONS OR AGENCY FEES AS RESULT OF DECISION AT SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I must say it seems strange if our policy would contravene any result of that study, especially when it is coming out within two months. My second question concerns the summit conference press release which indicated that a compromise decision of the conference called for a ban against irregular business practices and improper conduct in international trade. I wonder if the government has done anything about this. In particular, has it banned any departmental agency or department of government from paying commissions or secret commissions or agency fees to any