

eastern bloc country still to be citizens of that country and consider it a criminal offence for people to leave that country. As a result, those Canadian citizens who are visiting their homelands are always under the threat of arrest. I wonder if the minister would consider redesigning the application form and the information required in order to protect Canadian citizens visiting their homelands that are eastern bloc countries. Secondly, would he consider taking to cabinet a proposal to withdraw the provision in the Citizenship Act that gives Canadians dual citizenship, because that again threatens those Canadians visiting eastern bloc countries which happen to be their former homelands?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, my friend, the Secretary of State, can enlighten the hon. member further about the citizenship provisions.

We have given a great deal of consideration to the very real problem that the hon. member mentions. It is true that Canadian citizens who are travelling in an eastern European country do have some added difficulties as a result of the fact that the passport draws explicitly to the notice of the border authorities that they were born in that country. But the real problem stems not from that but from the fact, in any event, by the law of those countries they would be deemed to be citizens and the officials there would have other ways of finding this out.

In fact, given the growing standardization that I spoke of, and the need for this information in this form across the world, it is not just for the benefit of those countries, as the hon. member alleged in his preamble; it is really for the benefit of all Canadian citizens travelling abroad that they have the kind of information in their passports which is required to gain an easy admission to the countries they are visiting. So this is a case in which some Canadian citizens may be put at some disadvantage in a situation where others receive an advantage. We are doing our best in other ways to try to deal with the situation of those Canadians who may be disadvantaged.

* * *

ENERGY

EFFECT OF DROP IN WORLD OIL PRICES

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the world oil glut and the press reports today that the price set by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, will drop to some \$20 U.S. by the end of the year, can the minister assure the House and Canadians generally that the planned oil price increases for this year will be suspended if the world oil price drops or if the Canadian price reaches 75 per cent of that world price?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I would like to reassure the hon. member in that regard, that the Alberta-Canada agreement, as well as the agreement with the province of Saskatchewan,

provide very specifically that at no time will the price for Canadian conventional oil exceed 75 per cent of the international price, whatever that price may be. There is no danger that the price of old oil in Canada will exceed 75 per cent of the world price.

* * *

HOUSING

REQUEST FOR PROGRAM TO ASSIST HOME OWNERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the imaginative minister responsible for housing. The cost of living figures released today show that the cost of home ownership is up a dramatic and alarming 17 per cent. In the present year there will be 635,000 Canadian families renewing their mortgages. Since the bill introduced by the government to deal with housing will provide assistance for fewer than 5 per cent of these families, when is the government going to get serious about the problems faced by the vast majority of home owners and bring in a new program that will be effective?

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, on November 12, the budget introduced by the Minister of Finance of the Government of Canada indicated its priority in response to the housing conditions of Canadians and allocated an additional \$350 million toward solving some of the problems faced by Canadians looking at mortgage renewal, and to those Canadians looking for rental accommodation, especially to those young Canadians with young families seeking to establish their first residence. That bill was tabled in this House before Christmas of last year. Indeed, I sought the co-operation of the housing critic of the New Democratic Party in the month of January, during the recess of this House, for support of expenditure of those funds to bring relief to those Canadians facing mortgage renewals and looking for new accommodation.

This government had to introduce time limits on debate in this House during the month of February in order to proceed to the committee stage, the next stage to put this legislation into place. The committee is dealing with it now. I would ask that the leader of the New Democratic Party consider not only the relief that would be brought to Canadians looking for rental accommodation and to Canadians looking for jobs in the construction of that much needed rental accommodation. I would ask that he reconsider his party's obstruction of those provisions and reconsider the good that could be done for many Canadians across this country by speedy passage of that bill.

● (1140)

REQUEST FOR INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, the minister would be a joke if he were not pathetic. The question