

in Montreal is at least 15 cents more per litre than in neighbouring American states.

When is the Minister going to listen to consumers and order Petro-Canada to take the lead in reducing the price of gas?

[English]

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I really fail to understand how the Hon. Member who represents the New Democratic Party could want me to inflict a policy on Petro-Canada that would damage it. It is owned by Canadian taxpayers. Why would we impose self-inflicted wounds on the corporate body of Petro-Canada?

Petro-Canada is not a price leader, it is a price follower. I have assured the Hon. Member that Petro-Canada will pass on the savings on gasoline prices when Petro-Canada receives them.

MINISTER'S APPROACH

Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, from Newfoundland to northern Ontario to Vancouver Island, consumers across the country are asking the Government for relief. If the Minister is not prepared to direct Petro-Canada, will she tell the House what she will do for Canadian consumers?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have already put in place a system on behalf of the Government which will ensure that savings will be passed on to consumers.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss Carney: I have told the House that I am communicating with industry executives to ensure that all of that price decrease is passed on to consumers.

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ELECTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES—INQUIRY IF GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO SEND OBSERVERS

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Does the Government intend to send observers to the upcoming elections in the Philippines, to give the Western world the assurance that these elections will be held in accordance with standards normal in a democracy?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, that is not our intention.

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT AID

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Can the Minister give the House the assurance . . . Could he offer private groups—and I am thinking of certain Canadian and other groups that are going to send observers, ordinary citizens, to observe the election—the assurance that they will be able to count on the Government's support, so that as private groups, they can at least exercise some pressure on the Government of the Philippines so that these elections will be held under the best possible conditions?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member has a specific group in mind, I may take the option of the Canadian Government taking such action into consideration.

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[English]

ENERGY

PRICE OF GASOLINE—ROLE OF OIL COMPANIES

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister said yesterday that prices "reflect competition in the market-place" and that the market-place will ensure that Canadian consumers benefit from falling world oil prices.

Is she aware that the Director of Investigation and Research under the Combines Investigation Act reported in July, 1984, that: "The Canadian consumer has been forced to bear the increased prices that result from anti-competitive arrangements in the marketing and refining sectors—" of the oil industry and, if so, will she now instruct Petro-Canada to break the price-fixing monopoly of the big oil companies in this country?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, with respect, I suggest that the Hon. Member has just supported my point because the date he mentioned, July, 1984, is when the Liberal Government was in power. I agree that their energy policy was against competition and against the interest of the consumers. That is why I am telling the House that our energy policy is in the interest of consumers.

ROLE OF PETRO-CANADA

Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister agrees with the Director of Investigation, does she not agree further with the Director of Investigation that: "Petro-Canada has a role to play in fostering more competition at the pump"? Will she ensure that such a role is now played by our national oil company so that the consumers can get the benefit of lower oil prices?