

Oral Questions

to start today. We have made arrangements so that the refinery will not be short of oil.

* * *

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

SUGGESTED DISCONTINUANCE OF ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER CRUDE OIL FROM LARGE TANKER TO SMALLER VESSEL AT HALIFAX AND RESUMPTION OF BARGAINING WITH HARBOUR PILOTS

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment. Will the minister take the simple expediency of bringing to an end the very dangerous exercise being carried out at the mouth of Halifax harbour which, under almost ideal conditions, failed yesterday? Will she bring to an end this potential horror near Halifax Harbour? Will the minister get together with her colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, and get the harbour pilots and the Atlantic Pilotage Authority back to the bargaining table for the purpose of resolving this 3 or 4 per cent difference so that we can again have orderly conduct in the ports of Atlantic Canada, bringing to an end this exercise in madness off Halifax harbour?

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, those whose responsibility it is to get the parties together are trying very hard to do that. The Department of the Environment has a representative on the committee which is issuing these waivers and looking at the passage of tankers at this time. However, we do have a strike, and the environmental concerns are taken into account when giving permission for passage of ships. We are doing our best under the circumstances.

* * *

TRANSPORT

FAILURE OF ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER CRUDE OIL FROM TANKER TO SMALLER VESSEL AT HALIFAX—AMOUNT OF OIL ON HAND AT REFINERIES

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): I will direct my final supplementary to the Minister of Transport. In light of the fact that every time the two ships were tied together yesterday they broke apart, and God only knows what would have happened if they had been pumping oil at the time, will the minister advise how much crude oil reserve exists in the Imperial Oil plant and the Texaco plant in the port of Halifax and Dartmouth? How much is there? When will they run out? What will happen to the security of energy sources if in fact the Esso *Goa* and the Imperial *St. Clair* are not able to effectively transfer that oil?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there are many questions contained in the hon. member's question. First, I must say that the Department of Labour is working hard to get the parties together. Second, we are working with the Department of the Environment so that if any move of that kind is made, it will

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]

be made in the safest way. We have advisers there and we will not be taking any risks. If there were no transfers yesterday, it was because we thought it constituted a risk. They did not take that risk. The Department of the Environment so advised us yesterday because of the condition of the sea. However, it can be done. It has been done many times in the past. All the companies and technicians say that it can be done very safely. We do not want to take any risks. If something happens, I am ready to take the responsibility for it. With regard to the reserves of oil, I do not know exactly what it is. I will inquire and inform the hon. member on Monday. There is enough until Monday and I will advise the hon. member of the exact amount at that time.

* * *

ENERGY

POSSIBLE USE OF INTERPROVINCIAL POWER GRID TO OBTAIN POWER FROM NEW BRUNSWICK TO ALLEVIATE SHORTAGE IN NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, may I pour some oil on troubled waters—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCleave:—metaphysically but not physically. My question is to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources or the acting minister. Will the minister check to see whether any power shortages looming in Nova Scotia can be made up by using the interprovincial power grid, that is using New Brunswick power, since that grid was paid for by federal money to deal with emergencies?

Mr. Maurice Foster (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I will take note of those representations on behalf of the minister and secure an answer for the hon. member.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

DATE OF DECISION ON SELECTION OF LONG RANGE PATROL AIRCRAFT—POSSIBILITY OF INCREASE IN COST IF DECISION DELAYED AFTER AUGUST 1

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): My question is for the Minister of National Defence. I know that he was asked about a decision on the LRPA program a few days ago. Can he now assure the House that a decision will be made on or before August 1 at which time the firm tender prices advanced by Loughheed and Boeing will expire?

Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as I told the House last week, this major purchase for National Defence is now actively being considered by cabinet. It will be before cabinet next week.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, it has been considered by cabinet since May, 1968. We fought and won a war in a shorter time than it is taking the cabinet to make up its mind on the LRPA and come to a decision. Can the minister advise what escalation factor there will be in the