

*Oral Questions***PETRO-CANADA**

## PRIVATIZATION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister who will know from his recent trip to the West just how popular Petro-Canada is in Canada these days, especially in western Canada. Last week the Minister of Energy, when he was asked about the privatization of Petro-Canada, said that it is not a question of should we, it is really a question of timing. Yet the Deputy Prime Minister indicated in the House last week that in fact that is not the case.

Will the Prime Minister take the time to explain and clarify just what the Government's position is in terms of the privatization of Petro-Canada?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is quite right. When I was in western Canada again recently I was able to see both the popularity of Petro-Canada and the popularity of the federal Government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

• (1450)

**Mr. Broadbent:** Half of that is believable.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Everywhere I went, people said: "There is the shareholder of Petro-Canada".

I think this indeed provides me with an opportunity, on behalf of all Members of the House, to congratulate the Canadian athletes and all associated with the Olympics in Calgary.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Why are the NDP not applauding?

With regard to Petro-Canada, it has been made clear that no decisions have been taken in respect of this matter. When a decision is made, it will be announced in an appropriate manner. I suspect that my hon. friend will be one of the first to know.

## REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT GIVE NON-PRIVATIZATION ASSURANCE

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, there is obviously some confusion surrounding this issue with the contradiction presented by the two senior Ministers. The Prime Minister knows how Canadians feel about this issue since an election campaign not many years ago in which Canadians made a very clear statement as to their feelings.

Would the Prime Minister be prepared to rise in his place to say that the Government of Canada is not prepared to privatize Petro-Canada? In other words, would he say that the Government is not prepared "to sell the flame"?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I will not comment on that last point, but I should in fairness ask my hon. friend to look at *Hansard* of February 24, 1988, where the Minister of Energy said:

That is why, although the Cabinet has yet to make a decision at this time, the question of Petro-Canada is still being examined, both in my Department and in other government agencies.

He went on to say:

—I would like to point out that the present Government will make a decision about privatizing Petro-Canada when it believes it is in the interests of Canada and Canadians to do so.

Surely my hon. friend will not quarrel with the logic of that premise.

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**INCOME TAX ACT**

## NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN—OFFER OF FREE VACATION—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

**Mr. Alan Redway (York East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. The NDP is offering its contributors an opportunity to win a free trip to Australia and New Zealand.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Want to buy a ticket?

**Mr. Redway:** I would ask the Minister to launch an immediate investigation to ensure that the NDP is not ripping off Canadians by using tax deductible political contributions to fund this NDP vacation lottery.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Get CSIS to do it.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Better have a commission of inquiry.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. This initiative sounded so attractive to me that I briefly considered sending some money myself. However, I thought it might be misinterpreted under the circumstances.

Seriously, the Income Tax Act does not require any restrictions on how political Parties deal with their funds in terms of contributions. The Chief Electoral Officer has some jurisdiction when it comes to how funds are disbursed, but where a political Party would run into difficulty would be if it simply received and redirected funds for the benefit of a specific person. I take the question seriously—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacKay:** Perhaps I should say to my friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, for the benefit of a named individual. It is a serious question and I will take it as representation.