

of one shipment that has been interrupted. Through diplomatic means we are trying to define with a little more clarity the positions of the various shipping states with regard to Canada.

OIL—ALLEGED DIVERSION FROM CANADA OF TANKER BY EXXON—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of more information I received this afternoon from officials within Imperial Oil that Exxon is buying Venezuelan oil on Canadian accounts and then diverting that oil, with their own marine tankers, to American ports, can the minister say whether or not he is carrying out an independent investigation personally or whether he is just relying on the telegram to the particular oil company?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I do not know of any way in which I could have access to Exxon's accounts. I would have to say that Imperial Oil Company assures me that there have not been any diversions from their account and that all shipments are coming to Canada from Venezuela.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact I have information from officials of the company that a confidential memo was sent from Exxon in New York, and also from Texaco, New York, to their Toronto based companies referring to some of these issues, and also in light of the fact I am informed that Texaco is prepared or almost prepared to admit diverting at least one oil tanker, can the minister say what sanctions or other action he has in mind to prevent any diversion of this sort, be it by Exxon or by a Canadian subsidiary?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, at a time when we are pushing to get the maximum number of shipments into the Canadian market, I am not sure that sanctions against a particular company would be effective. I am faced really with a conflict of credibility between the source that the hon. member is relying on and the assurance given to me directly. All I can say at this stage is that I will repeat his allegation to the company.

POSSIBLE LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH PUBLICLY OWNED PETROLEUM CORPORATION

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): I would like to ask the minister whether or not, in view of the present crisis in oil internationally, he is considering introducing legislation to establish a publicly owned petroleum corporation that would have, among other powers, jurisdiction over imports of crude oil into this country?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): That is a question under consideration—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):—although I cannot see any way in which such legislation would be available at this time. It is not so much the ingress of the commodity into

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Canada as its egress from the supplying states that is the problem.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICE

REQUEST THAT SALARY OFFER TO CLERKS BE INCREASED

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the hon. President of the Treasury Board.

In view of the fact that his department has granted \$3,000 and \$4,000 increases to hundreds of executives in the Public Service, can the hon. minister tell us whether he intends to seriously consider the 12 per cent salary increase requested by the 40,000 CR employees who are unable to balance their budgets with a salary of \$5,000 a year?

Hon. Charles M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Yes, Mr. Speaker. We are negotiating with several groups of these employees in order to sign collective agreements.

[English]

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, would the minister consider cutting out some of the fat and waste in the upper echelons of the public service so there would be more money available for these clerks?

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ENERGY

ELIMINATION OF TARIFF ON PETROLEUM PRODUCTS—ASSURANCE THAT SAVINGS WILL BE PASSED ON TO CONSUMER

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In light of the fact that elimination of customs duty will mean a cut of one-third to one cent per gallon on certain petroleum products, what measures is the minister taking to ensure that these savings will be passed on to consumers?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): As the hon. gentleman knows, Mr. Speaker, we are in close contact with the industry, particularly in eastern Canada, with regard to its products, and we will make a point of making certain that the reduction in the cost of any shipments coming in after this point will be reflected in the price.

● (1510)

OIL EXPORT TAX—POSSIBILITY OF SIMILAR LEVY ON OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): In view of the export tax on oil, is the government considering implementing an export tax on electricity, coal and other forms of energy?