

member's representation is on the record and I am sure it will be appreciated.

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### PIPELINES

#### ALASKA GAS PIPELINE—QUERY RESPECTING COMPLETION OF PROJECT

**Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. He will recall giving the House iron-clad guarantees many months ago that construction of the Alaska gas pipeline would go ahead as planned, that is, for completion in 1983. Reports coming from the Congress of the United States now have it that the U.S. authorities are reluctant to proceed on account of perceived anti-American provisions within the national energy policy.

Could the minister please tell the House whether any changes are to take place in the national energy policy, or if he plans any other course of action to ensure the timely completion of the Alaska gas pipeline in its entirety, as he previously promised this House?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, I do not know where my hon. friend is getting his information. On the contrary, the information we have is that the United States administration is very supportive of the project. The best evidence of this is that the administration has sent a waiver bill to Congress for adoption, which is going to remove a lot of the obstacles that remain in the way of completion of this project. We have received no indication at all from the United States administration that it would be considering even a delay in the construction of that particular pipeline. We hope that Congress is going to live by its commitment, that is, the unanimous resolution passed by Congress a year and a half ago in which both the House of Representatives and the Senate fully endorsed the project and said that steps should be taken to make sure it is realized.

**Mr. Nickerson:** Madam Speaker, according to the minister everything in the garden is rosy, but that does not seem to be the view taken by the hon. Mitchell Sharp, the pipeline commissioner. In a speech given in New York a few days ago he referred to what he called "a new element of uncertainty" that has been injected into the whole complex scheme.

**An hon. Member:** Are you against it?

**Mr. Nickerson:** With all due respect to the minister, Madam Speaker, I would suggest that his iron-cladding is getting a little rusty.

#### EXPORTS OF GAS TO UNITED STATES

**Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is this: if the American sections of the pipeline through Alaska are not proceeded with, and if the

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sections of the line through the Yukon and northern British Columbia are not proceeded with—and you have to admit that this now looks like a distinct possibility—is it still the intention of the government to be prepared to authorize exports of Canadian gas through the pre-build section, or is it likely that it will reconsider those export permits in light of the possibility that the pipeline as a whole will not be built?

● (1450)

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member referred to a speech given by the hon. Mitchell Sharp. For the purpose of fairness and honesty in this House, the hon. member should have read the whole sentence. Mr. Sharp said:

A new element of uncertainty was injected into this whole complex process with the election of a new administration under President Reagan last November.

That has nothing to do with the NEP. Since that speech the administration has removed that element of uncertainty by sending to Congress the waiver bill that I referred to, which indicates the administration wants to see this project proceed. As far as the possibility of cutting back on export permits that have already been granted is concerned, the government is not considering any such thing.

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### NATIONAL DEFENCE

#### INCREASED COST OF F-18 FIGHTER AIRCRAFT PROGRAM

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. In March last, during the study of the estimates of the minister's department, we were all informed that the total program costs in budget year dollars for the new fighter aircraft would be just over \$4 billion. In August Brigadier General Slaunwhite said that the program costs are now estimated to be \$5.2 billion. Would the minister explain where the extra billion is going to be spent? Perhaps more important, could he explain where it is coming from?

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, I am very glad to be able to answer the hon. member. I may not be able to answer him in detail, but I can in a global way. I hope now there will be confidence in the F-18 aircraft because the Australians have just bought 75 of them.

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

**Mr. Lamontagne:** The increase in cost was projected in the contract as part of the difference between the exchange on Canadian dollars, which, as hon. members know, goes up or down.

**Mr. Epp:** Down.

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