

sion of refinery capacity designed for the purpose of using overseas oil for refining in Canada and export to the United States is somewhat different. I can see that the companies might have some reason to take a fresh look before determining whether they would go ahead. I think they would want to consider the situation before deciding whether they would want to build that refinery for the use of the Canadian market or whether they would continue with their original plan to build a refinery for export of the finished product.

Mr. Lewis: The minister need not have been so modest about his knowledge of what I had in mind. His answer clearly showed he knew darned well what I was referring to. I am therefore asking him whether he or the National Energy Board will watch this situation to make sure that this additional refining capacity in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces is not slowed down merely because the corporations may not be able to make as much profit by shipping the gasoline or other refined products to the United States, and to make sure that the products of these refineries are made available in eastern Canada at reasonable prices?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I am not certain what refinery proposal in the province of Quebec the hon. gentleman has in mind. If he would like to specify, I could comment. With regard to refineries specifically constructed with re-export in mind, I can naturally see why there might be some reason for the companies to take a second look at proposals which, at the moment, are in the project stage, to decide whether they want to put them in. As for refineries which are already in existence, they are covered by Canadian export control. I am thinking particularly about those at Come-by-Chance and Port Hawkesbury. They will be covered by Canadian export control and, if necessary, the product will be available on a priority basis for the Canadian market.

Mr. Lewis: May I ask the minister whether he or the government have considered the establishment of a Canadian or national petroleum corporation so that there would be a Crown corporation to protect the public interest in the production, distribution and pricing of oil products.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): The question whether a national petroleum company—this has become a term of art in the oil business—should be set up in Canada is discussed in the energy studies which I expect to be available in the last week of June.

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[Translation]

HARBOURS

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF SUPERTANKER PORT ON ST. LAWRENCE RIVER—POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES OF POINTE-AU-PIC—MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Transport.

Further to the questions put to the hon. minister last week concerning the construction of a supertanker port on

Oral Questions

the St. Lawrence River, can he tell us whether he has received a memorandum listing the advantages which Pointe-au-Pic has to offer for the development of such a port?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): I have received a memorandum, Mr. Speaker, about the Pointe-au-Pic wharf, but it is not in reference to a deep-water port. I do not think that the people of Pointe-au-Pic are considering a deep-water port but one that will be more efficient than the existing one.

Mr. Caouette (Charlevoix): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Is the development of a port at Pointe-au-Pic foreseeable in the near future?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): I am about to study the brief that has been submitted to me, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

COMBINES

INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED GASOLINE PRICE FIXING

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It deals with gasoline prices and price fixing across Canada. I would refer the hon. gentleman to the question asked by my hon. friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka two weeks ago on this subject, and the answer the minister then gave. In view of the fact that a wide discrepancy exists between retail gasoline prices in Edmonton, Calgary and Regina close to the resource, and retail prices in Winnipeg, far from the resource, has the minister any knowledge of an investigation by the anti-combines tribunal into this price fixing at Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): While it is not the practice to refer to any specific inquiry which is being conducted until it has been disposed of in one way or another, I think it is public knowledge that a formal complaint was made to the director of the combines branch by members of the Consumers Association of Canada under section 7 of the Combines Investigation Act with reference to certain practices in the petroleum industry. I can assure the hon. member that the director is carrying out the statutory responsibilities that fall upon him as a result of this formal complaint.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Would the minister ask the anti-combines branch to take specific note of what I have stated, that there is a big discrepancy between the prices charged in Winnipeg and in Regina, Calgary and Edmonton? Why is it that the people close to the resource have to pay so much more for their gasoline when their taxes at the provincial level are actually lower?

Mr. Gray: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be very happy to draw the point raised by the hon. member to the attention of the staff of the combines branch.