

and not the multinationals should be the exclusive importer of oil into Canada?

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, perhaps after the euphoria of the weekend, did not hear my answer to his earlier question. I said that there may well be an agreement before December 11.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Maybe.

**Mr. Clark:** Yes, there may well be an agreement by that time. We are moving in that direction and I am hopeful that we can realize that objective. Regarding Saudi Arabia, to my knowledge we have not received the representations which, I have read in the press, have been directed to the American government. I will check, and if there is useful information to convey to the House, naturally I will convey it.

As to the third part of the question, again for the forty-fourth or forty-fifth time in the House, I indicate to the Leader of the New Democratic Party that, no, we are not reconsidering the plan to review the role of Petro-Canada.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, I conclude my questioning with a two-part question which arises from the Prime Minister's answers. Is he committing the government to investigating whether or not price reductions which have been passed on to the multinationals by Saudi Arabia have, indeed, been passed on to Canadian consumers? Or will the situation be like it was in the United States, where consumers are being gouged?

Second—and I do not ask this in a polemical way—would he explain briefly to the House why it is not advantageous to remove the multinationals as middlemen, when we are importing oil, because of the complications both in price and the insecurity of supply which have arisen with the multinationals acting as middlemen?

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, a specific question was asked about a representation from Saudi Arabia. I will investigate whether such a representation has been received. If not, we will, in any event, see if there is any cause for concern to Canadian consumers regarding the price we are paying. As the Leader of the New Democratic Party will know, we are now paying a price which in effect is a flat rate based on a weighted average.

● (1430)

In relation to the latter part of the question by the Leader of the New Democratic Party, it is our judgment that there is no useful substitute that could, in the real world, play the role that is advocated by the Leader of the NDP, and certainly it is our view that Petro-Canada would not be able to play that role as effectively as the Leader of the NDP believes it would be able to.

### Oral Questions

#### NATIONAL UNITY

##### INQUIRY WHETHER GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES EQUALITY OF TWO FOUNDING PEOPLES—LINGUISTIC RIGHTS ENTRENCHED IN CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. On Friday in this House, in answer to a question by the hon. member for Saint-Maurice, as reported at page 1638 of *Hansard* the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations (Mr. Jarvis) said:

I think it most accurate and most important to emphasize that our discussions continued to recognize the right of the provinces in so far as education is concerned. We then went on to say that, given that right, we would like to explore with our provincial counterparts the entrenchment of the constitution so that the right is protected.

Could the Prime Minister interpret that statement for the House, and will he tell the House whether this represents a change in policy on the part of his government from his often repeated statements that he would not entrench the rights of official language minorities? Also, will the Prime Minister confirm that he now recognizes it is a responsibility of the federal government to lead—and I say lead—the provinces in entrenching the linguistic and educational rights of the official language minorities in a revised constitution?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the statement of the Minister of State needs no interpretation. He indicated that the Government of Canada was exploring that possibility. That is exactly what we are doing. There has been no change in policy at all.

The position indicated by this government and, indeed, indicated as a result of the Kingston conference involving this party, then in opposition, and certain provincial governments less numerous then than now is that, in our judgment, the most useful route to pursue regarding minority language rights in Canada is to have the federal government encourage the provinces through an indication that we would try to move forward on the basis of agreement, rather than threatening any province with the imposition of a regime. That remains the position of this government.

#### [Translation]

##### POSSIBLE ENTRENCHMENT OF LINGUISTIC RIGHTS IN CONSTITUTION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the right hon. Prime Minister. In its recommendation No. 4, the Task Force on Canadian Unity—I think it was recommendation No. 4—said that should all provinces agree on these or any other linguistic rights, these rights should then be entrenched in the constitution. Could the right hon. Prime Minister tell the House or at least give us some assurance that if a majority of provinces indicate that they favour the entrenchment of these rights in the constitution, he would act accordingly and give Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Ontario and, I think, New-