

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I should make it clear that the decision was made by an arbitration tribunal appointed by the two private parties to the contract and not by the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board. The officials of the two governments did indeed meet a week ago and discussed the price of gas. This question will be discussed again, I hope, when I meet with the Minister of Energy for Alberta this coming week.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary again is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Does this decision that was announced yesterday have in the minister's opinion any major ramifications for the settlement of the negotiations between the federal government and the provinces in respect of energy prices.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I think it gives a pretty clear indication that the most useful thing would be for the governments to arrive at a mutually acceptable price very much below the arbitration tribunal award.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSALS INVOLVING COMMONWEALTH IN AFFAIRS OF NON-COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES—CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of statements from some leading personalities at the Commonwealth Conference regarding proposals that would involve the Commonwealth in the affairs of non-Commonwealth countries such as Mozambique, Rhodesia and Southwest Africa, could the minister indicate what position Canada is adopting toward these proposals?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of more information on the exact nature of the proposals I have no comment to make. I have no doubt, however, that the question of southern Africa and the regimes existing there will be a matter of great concern to the Commonwealth leaders and on that point Canada will of course support strongly principles that would lead to majority rule and racial equality in all parts of Africa.

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, considering the extent of our aid to various members of the Commonwealth, what steps then would Canada take to prevent the diversion of Canadian funds into questionable political and possibly military ventures?

Mr. MacEachen: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have aid programs with quite a number of countries. In the absence of specific details that funds are being diverted to military purposes I have no comment to make. I do not believe, nor have I any evidence to suggest, that such funds are being diverted for military purposes in any part of the world.

[Mr. Gillies.]

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

GAP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE OF NUCLEAR AND OTHER NATIONS—POSSIBILITY OF PROHIBITING SALE OF CANDU REACTORS

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I apologize to him for not having given him notice. I attempted to get in touch with his office. In view of the treaty meeting in Geneva on May 6 based on the gap which exists between scientific and technological knowledge of the nuclear nations as opposed to the rest of the world, which is now proven by the advent of India into the nuclear club, I should like to ask the minister whether an alternative has been worked out and whether Canada is prepared to abide by this alternative and if necessary stop the sale of CANDU reactors?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Well, Mr. Speaker, the question is quite complicated. My colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in December last announced the system of safeguards that would be required for the sale of nuclear materials to other countries.

These safeguards are in place and will be observed. In the case of India we are still conducting discussions with the Indian Government with a view to overcoming the difficulties that have arisen as a result of the exploding of a nuclear device in that country.

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PUBLISHING

PROPOSED LICENSING OF NEWSTANDS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State but in his absence and in the absence of his parliamentary secretary I would direct it to the Government Leader. A recent Canadian Press statement reports the minister as saying that a licensing system may be the next step to ensure that newsstands carry a certain amount of Canadian material. Could I ask the minister whether the guidelines of this proposal would be similar to those the government has suggested for Canadian periodicals which is 80 per cent Canadian content?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think this question should be directed to my colleague.

Mr. Friesen: He is not here.

Mr. Sharp: He was here yesterday and could have been asked the question at that time. He will be back in a few days.