

*Oral Questions*

influenced by the report of the group that is advising the Auditor General.

**Mr. Baldwin:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In light of the views of this House, certainly the views of members on this side of the House as illustrated by the motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 43 this afternoon, would the minister take into account our views that parliament should have some input into the preparation of the bill because of the special relationship between the Auditor General and parliament, rather than just vetting the mild version that the government will probably prepare?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, I am quite sure that the government, when it exercises its responsibility, will want to act in the interests of parliament as a whole and will be very ready to accept any amendments that are useful and in the interests of the adequate control of the public purse.

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● (1430)

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

CONFERENCE OF OIL PRODUCING AND CONSUMING  
NATIONS—CANADIAN REPRESENTATIONS ON SUBJECTS TO BE  
DISCUSSED

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs relating to questions asked of him yesterday regarding the energy conference in Paris that started on the seventh, and in respect of which the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said on March 5 the government of Canada would keep in close touch with these discussions and make its views known to all participants with whom we have diplomatic relations and, in particular, with members of the International Energy Agency which will be participating. Does the minister stand by his response yesterday, that we were not in attendance at that conference, therefore how could we have expressed our views, not being there?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the general view of the Canadian government on the conference is that we would have preferred that it concentrate on energy and closely related matters. As I understand the situation, however, this view was not shared by all members of the committee who attended. Had we been present we would have sought a compromise, but we were not there and, as the hon. gentleman knows, so far the efforts to get the conference underway have not been successful. As I told him yesterday, however, these efforts are continuing.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs whether in fact the government of Canada made any representations regarding the position that should be taken at the conference, or made any representations for example through the International Energy Agency as to that position? Did the minister in fact make any representations?

[Mr. Sharp.]

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, the views that the government expressed were the views we made known to the International Energy Agency. My understanding of the position is that these developments took place in the last few days, and we were not called upon specifically to comment on them. I have expressed the view, which I have expressed again now, that we would prefer a conference that was devoted specifically to energy and related matters. At that preparatory conference, however, some of the underdeveloped countries wanted to extend the ambit of the conference to a wider scope, and the preparatory conference broke down on this question. We are still hopeful, however, that some compromise can be reached.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, even if the minister or some minister in the government did not keep in close enough contact to make his views known while the meeting was going on, has the government of Canada made any representations since that time as to the scope of the agenda it would have preferred? When the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs said a moment ago that Canada would have preferred some compromise did he mean to indicate that although Canada's preference would be confined to a discussion on energy or petroleum, Canada would be prepared to enlarge the scope of the conference to include other raw materials?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, we would prefer the conference to be held, but we would not want a conference that was so wide in its scope as to have very little influence on the field of energy, which is our prime interest. We are in favour of a compromise.

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[Translation]

**LABOUR CONDITIONS**

STRIKE OF LONGSHOREMEN IN QUEBEC—INQUIRY WHETHER  
MINISTER MET WITH MEDIATOR

**Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette):** Mr. Speaker, I want to put a question to the Minister of Labour.

Since on April 2, Mr. Poirier, the federal mediator in the longshoremen's dispute in Quebec, stated that he was unable to meet the two parties and since the negotiations were interrupted at that time, I want to ask the minister whether he has met with Mr. Poirier since April 2, what the discussions were, and what kind of measures the minister invited the mediator to take to settle the dispute.

[English]

**Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Labour):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did meet with Mr. Poirier I believe on the date the hon. member mentioned. He indicated he had been meeting with the parties but negotiations had broken down, and that he felt there should be an interval of time for the parties to reassess their positions, at which time there might be hope for further mediation.

[Translation]

**Mr. La Salle:** Mr. Speaker, I want to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Labour.

Since the minister considers it necessary to let some time pass before the negotiations can resume, when will