

Oral Questions

from Alberta. However, it would be much more desirable if the premier did have the minister there.

I am still puzzled about the intent of Premier Barrett's telegram. I hope he is aware that there is a meeting scheduled for November 23; at any rate, I will try to pursue the matter with him. I might add that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is consulting with various provinces on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, particularly at this time with the ministers and premiers of the eastern provinces.

As to the other question asked by the hon. member, I cannot add to what the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has said repeatedly. The subject of a national petroleum company is before the cabinet. It has not yet been decided in any final way. We shall let the House know of the government's decision in the usual manner.

EASTERN CANADA OIL SUPPLY SITUATION—SPECIFIC PLANS FOR EXTENSION OF PIPELINE TO MONTREAL

Mr. Jim Balfour (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Having regard to the oil supply situation in eastern Canada, can the minister tell us what specific plans the government has formulated in connection with the Montreal pipeline project which go beyond the general commitment to the project embodied in the announcement of September 4, whether such specific plans were discussed with the premier of Quebec last week, and whether the National Energy Board has been asked to study the project and make a recommendation?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): The board would deal with that matter in the form of an application, and no application has yet been made. There have been discussions both with Quebec at the official level and with the Interprovincial Pipeline Company with regard to the details of such a pipeline. I cannot say whether or not this matter was discussed last Friday, but it is receiving active attention from the federal agencies concerned as well as other interested parties.

Mr. Balfour: In view of the minister's statement that such a pipeline could deliver 250,000 extra barrels of oil per day to Montreal without any major back-up construction to the wellhead being needed, can the hon. gentleman now be more specific and inform the House whether the government has undertaken any concrete action since September 4 which permitted him to make such a projection?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Yes, Mr. Speaker. That judgment is based on information from Interprovincial Pipelines.

OIL SUPPLIES—REQUEST FOR EARLY DECISION ON WHETHER NATIONAL CORPORATION TO BE ESTABLISHED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH VENEZUELA

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. It seems obvious that it would take some time to set up a national petroleum company or corporation and that it may be

[Mr. Trudeau.]

necessary to have such an agency in order to obtain sufficient oil supplies from Venezuela for use in eastern Canada this winter. May I ask the Prime Minister whether he and his colleagues can assure the House that they will come to a conclusion on this matter within the next few days in order that eastern Canada will not face a shortage of supplies because of the failure of the government to reach a decision to set up the necessary agency for that purpose?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I am afraid I cannot agree with the hon. member's logic. As the minister has said a number of times in the House, the existence of such a company is not the only factor which would determine whether the supplies are sufficient or not. There are a number of other factors involved, including direct relations between the government and the governments of the oil-producing nations.

* * *

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

ACCURACY OF FIGURES IN TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT ON FARM IMPROVEMENT LOANS

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

I should have asked this question last Friday to enable the minister to enlighten the House, but I did not have the opportunity to do so. Did the minister look through the 28th Report on the Farm Improvement Loans Act for the year 1972? If so, would he be willing to say whether the data included in this report date from 1914, as suggested by his parliamentary secretary last Thursday following my intervention?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Those were the figures we were given. If they were not accurate, I will check on them and see that they are rectified.

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Is the minister considering taking the necessary steps to better inform his parliamentary secretary?

* * *

[English]

ENERGY

OIL—MOBILIZATION OF TRUCKS AND RAILWAY TANK CARS TO MOVE FUEL TO DEFICIT AREAS IF REQUIRED

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. At the meeting with the provincial resources ministers on November 23, does the minister plan to put forward the work he has done on collecting or mobilizing trucks and railway tank cars to move fuel from surplus areas to deficit areas this winter?