

*Oral Questions*REQUEST THAT MINISTER CONVENE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL  
CONFERENCE

**Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works. Some time ago, in recognition of the problem which exists with respect to social and co-operative housing, and low vacancy rates in the National Capital area and across the country, I asked the Minister whether he intended to convene a federal-provincial conference with respect to housing, and facing these problems. He told me that he would look into the matter. Has he done so? What is his intention with respect to calling together all the partners in providing housing for Canadians?

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works):** Madam Speaker, I had a meeting with a number of my colleagues at the HUDAC conference in Vancouver. We discussed whether it would be wise for us to get together before, during, or after the budget period. It was agreed that many provincial housing Ministers would want to know what would be the positions of their Ministers of Finance vis-à-vis housing and that in fact we should let the situation develop normally.

## QUERY RESPECTING MINISTER'S INTENTIONS

**Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Madam Speaker, is the Minister telling the House that, in effect, the provincial Ministers have said they will await the budget, that the Minister himself feels that we should await the budget, that the question with respect to a federal-provincial conference on housing is still an open one in terms of the Government, and that that matter is still something which will be considered by the Minister responsible for housing?

**Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works):** Madam Speaker, the provincial Ministers of housing have done what I have done. They have had close consultations with their Ministers of Finance. I hope out of that will come progress in the area we are discussing.

I might say to the Hon. Member that his question may mislead the House. The reality is that housing starts have improved quite dramatically. In fact it is one of the positive areas of the economy at this time.

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## TRANSPORT

## APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT OF MAISLIN INDUSTRIES

**Mr. Bill McKnight (Kindersley-Lloydminster):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. As part of the \$34 million loan guarantee made by the Government to Maislin Trucking, one condition was that there would be a president appointed acceptable to the company and to the Government of Canada. Could the Minister inform the House whether the appointment of Dick,

or R. T. Skillinger, from New Bedford, Massachusetts, formerly of Hemingway Trucking, was acceptable to the Government?

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Yes, Madam Speaker.

## APPOINTEE'S EXPERIENCE

**Mr. Bill McKnight (Kindersley-Lloydminster):** Madam Speaker, it may be because of the need for experience, but could the Minister explain to the House why it was Mr. Skillinger from Hemingway Trucking, a company which has been operating in bankruptcy under Section 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Act since July 28, 1982? Is this person the man they thought they should have, because of his experience in bankruptcy, to continue to lead Maislin?

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Madam Speaker, obviously Maislin wanted to hire as competent an individual as it could possibly find on the market because it wants the company to survive. We also want the company to survive because that job preservation is very important to the country. Consequently, after a serious search for a president of the corporation, Mr. Skillinger was the individual thought to be the best person available. We also had some of our people interview him and we felt that he had the qualifications based on the applicants available for the job.

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## PETRO-CANADA

## REPORTED PURCHASE OF ROMANIAN MANUFACTURED PIPE

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I ask him to respond to a rather disturbing report which I have received from my constituency indicating that Petro-Canada has literally bought miles and miles, truckloads and truckloads of casing pipe and surface pipe from Romania, and that this pipe is even hauled up to northern British Columbia from Texas, I think, by an American trucking company? Would the Minister comment on that? Would he undertake to investigate the matter and to tell the House whether there is any kind of procurement policy to which the people's oil company is required to adhere?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, of course I am not aware of this problem. Certainly I will inquire about it and report to the Hon. Member. I am glad the Hon. Member sees a role in Canadian society for Petro-Canada. Some of the Members of his own Party did not want Petro-Canada at all.