

Oral Questions

reports, being looked after in the way of accommodation, food, shelter, pocket money and that sort of thing.

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[Translation]

TRANSPORT**MEASURES TO KEEP ST. LAWRENCE RIVER OPEN THIS WINTER TO ASSURE OIL DELIVERIES TO MONTREAL**

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport.

Is he considering taking the necessary measures to further facilitate winter navigation on the St. Lawrence River up to Montreal and thus ensure as far as possible the transportation of oil products up to the Montreal harbour and continue to fight the price increase of oil on the Quebec market this winter?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, all depends on the Ship Traffic Branch. Was the hon. member thinking about the navigation on the Lower St. Lawrence River up to Montreal or from Montreal up to the Great Lakes? There is quite a difference between those two things. I am not sure of the meaning of this question.

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I meant the Lower St. Lawrence traffic up to Montreal. My supplementary question is the following: Does the minister intend to meet shortly the officials of the St. Lawrence Pilots Federation so as to discuss this possibility with them?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): I must inform the House that the St. Lawrence pilots did not ask to see me. Surely I have no intention of writing them and ask for a meeting. I have no objection in case they have problems. The traffic of ships on the St. Lawrence River has considerably increased over the last few years. Ten years back only 150 ships entered the gulf. Today over 2,000 sail through it during winter. Of course this depends on the market requirements and also on the economic situation of sea transportation.

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I am told that the St. Lawrence Pilots Federation has sent a cable to this effect to the Minister of Transport who says he has received no news. Could the minister check whether he has received this cable?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for South Shore.

MEASURES TO ACHIEVE MORE EFFICIENT INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION IN ORDER TO CONSERVE ENERGY

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Transport. In view of possible fuel shortages in Canada this winter and the prospect that these shortages may extend for some time to come, has the minister given any consideration to imple-

[Mr. Andras.]

menting immediately plans for more efficient intercity transportation as a means of conserving energy?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for having given me notice of this question. There is no doubt this is something that we would like to do and we will do it wherever it is possible. We have been negotiating with Ontario for better service between cities. Maybe we can do it with other provinces. Of course, the only thing is that we cannot change these things overnight.

Mr. Woolliams: Not with this government, at any rate.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Not even with yours, Sir, I regret. When we decide to build new track, new locomotives or new cars, that takes some time. I think the idea behind the question is one we must retain and work on very seriously.

Mr. Crouse: Has the Minister of Transport made any proposals to cabinet for new intercity transportation facilities? If so, what response has he received from his cabinet colleagues?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, I am about to produce a very long memorandum to cabinet on all transportation problems in Canada, including this one.

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ENERGY**OIL—INDICATION BY GOVERNMENT TO SYNCRUDE REGARDING PRICING POLICY TO BE APPLIED TO PRODUCT**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I should like to ask him what indications he has given to the principals of Syncrude with regard to the pricing policy to be applied to their product?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I answered a question of the hon. member for York South on this point about a week ago, indicating that our expectation with regard to pricing over the long run for Syncrude and for similar projects would be that a price would be available to make the product marketable and economic from their standpoint, very much in the terms set out by the Prime Minister in his statement to the House. One of the specific assurances we gave them was with regard to the question of shutting in capacity, namely, that given the importance of economics to a synthetic crude plant they would not be subject to be shut-in as a conventional well would be.

● (1140)

Mr. Stanfield: Given the significance of any such communication to Syncrude, or its principals and the light this might shed on the government's policy with regard to the pricing of oil from the tar sands, would the minister be prepared to table the letter he has written to Syncrude or its principals on this subject?