

NORMALIZING OF LEGAL STATUS

Question No. 4,225—**Mr. MacKay:**

According to the decision by the government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on March 16, 1977, can Canadian residents, formerly citizens of Czechoslovakia, "normalize" their legal status with their former country by making an application to the Czechoslovak Consulate in Montreal and must the application be accompanied by other personal documents and, if so (a) what role, if any, does the Bureau of Legal Affairs of the Department of External Affairs assume in the process of Canadian residents presenting such applications to the consulate (b) is it the policy of the department to keep records of all the cases involving such applications?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): As a matter of general practice, the Bureau of Legal Affairs of the Department of External Affairs is often requested to authenticate the signatures on official Canadian documents such as birth certificates, marriage certificates or citizenship certificates. However, in doing so, it is not necessary for the Bureau of Legal Affairs to be told of the reason(s) why such authentication is requested. It is therefore not possible to determine whether the person requesting the authentication is in the process of normalizing his or her legal status with his or her country of origin. The mandate of the Bureau of Legal Affairs in this respect is primarily to provide the service in question.

[Translation]

Mr. Smith: I ask, Madam Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Speaker: The questions enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[English]

PIPELINES

POSTPONEMENT OF ALASKA HIGHWAY NATURAL GAS PROJECT

Madam Speaker: I have a notice of an emergency debate from the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell).

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Madam Speaker, for the serious reasons I made clear to Your Honour in a letter which I sent to your office earlier today on the important subject of the postponement, due to lack of financing, of the Alaska highway natural gas pipeline, the biggest construction project to be undertaken in Canada since the CPR, I seek leave to move, seconded by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton), the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the failure to find financing for the Alaska highway gas pipeline and its effects on the Canadian economy and energy export policy.

S.O. 26

The reasons in the letter include the treaty with the United States, the validity of existing legislation—

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, I have a point of order. I realize that technically an opposition day, designated as it has been by the government and concerning which a motion was tabled last Friday around two o'clock, is normally an item of government business, but traditionally since this practice has been extant, it has been an opposition day. We now have a member of an opposition party, at a time when an order of business has been put down on behalf of the opposition, moving a motion which, if granted, would displace that opposition's right to debate the subject of their choice during the supply period.

I question the right of the hon. member to do that at this stage when the motion is on the table and the House is seized of that motion. Under the circumstances I question, with great respect, the freedom of the Chair even to consider accepting a Standing Order 26 motion from a member of the opposition.

Madam Speaker: The point made by the hon. member is noted. However, I do not believe there is anything in the Standing Orders to prevent that. I will deal with the matter of the urgent debate if the hon. member will continue his very brief presentation.

Mr. Waddell: Madam Speaker, it will just take seconds. Let me say for the record that we heard about this at 5.30 on Friday. Suppose Canada had gone to war over the weekend, does the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) say that we could not have an emergency debate on Monday? His point of order is absolute nonsense. Let me continue. Before I was so sillily interrupted—

An hon. Member: "Adroitly".

Mr. Waddell: Stupidly interrupted. I will start all over again.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: The hon. member is trying to get more time. I urge him to continue from where he left off.

Mr. Waddell: As I was saying, the important matter requiring consideration is the financing of the Alaska highway gas pipeline. I sent a letter to Your Honour stating the reasons, including the treaty with the United States, the validity of existing legislation, the Dempster lateral problem, the future of gas exports and the fact that it is a most complicated matter to deal with, as question period today showed.

I would like to add that I was not able to include in that letter that Bill C-93, which we will be debating this week, does not really give us the opportunity to debate what I set out in my letter and the issues herein involved, because that bill deals with taxation. Your Honour has all my arguments set out in detail in the letter.