

DOMESTIC CRUDE OIL—DISCUSSIONS WITH ALBERTA ON
MAINTENANCE OF PRICE AND SECURING OF AGREEMENT
BY OIL COMPANIES

Mr. Peter C. Bawden (Calgary South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. The Prime Minister said on December 6 that the government "will, therefore, undertake new discussions with the government of Alberta and with the oil companies to secure their agreement to maintain the price of domestically produced oil." Will the minister say whether these discussions have taken place with the province of Alberta and whether the government has secured agreement from the oil companies to maintain the present price levels on crude oil?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the oil companies, there has not been universal agreement. Some companies have indicated they would like to come and discuss the full implications of the request. With regard to Alberta, I think it is fair to say there is not agreement at the moment by that province.

Mr. Bawden: Have any discussions taken place on this question with the province of Alberta since December 6?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I have been involved in the House and I personally have not been able to pursue this question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are a number of members seeking supplementaries, the hon. member for Athabasca, the hon. member for Dauphin and others. Perhaps we might complete the first round of questions and return to supplementaries immediately thereafter.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DEGREE OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN CANADA AND
EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY—POSSIBLE
APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR TO CANADA

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I have not had a chance to obtain a copy of the communiqué he tabled as it was not yet available. I should like to ask the minister whether the report that there was some agreement on an informal, unstructured basis or something or other regarding consultation between Canada and the European Economic Community makes any change whatsoever in the status quo in relations between Canada and the European Economic Community? Was there any advance from what we have had until now?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have received suggestions from the European Economic Community that they would be prepared to issue a declaration dealing with economic relations between Canada and the community. We have said that in principle we are interested, and we are having discussions along these lines. We have also been able to

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make some informal arrangements for consultation, so I believe we are making advances on both fronts.

Mr. Lewis: I understand that one of the objectives of the government was to have a representative of the European Economic Community in Ottawa so that there could be direct relations between our government and the community. I understand also that so far this has not been agreed to by the community. Under these circumstances, is the community taking the position that their ambassador or representative in Washington is also assigned to Canada, or is there further discussion about a representative in Ottawa?

Mr. Sharp: The hon. gentleman will remember that we have established a mission to the community. For the time being our ambassador to the community is the main link between the community and Canada. I also suggested to the commissioner responsible for international affairs, Sir Christopher Soames, that the Community should reciprocate by establishing an office in Canada. This is under consideration.

● (1420)

Mr. Lewis: In view of the obvious importance of the trade relationship between Canada and the European Economic Community, and as the minister emphasized in a recent statement to the Canadian Institute of International Affairs that the European Economic Community is by far our second largest trading partner, would the minister indicate what obstacles there are in the way of a direct representative from Brussels to Canada and a more formal arrangement for relations between ourselves and the community? What are the obstacles that stand in the way?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, there is no obstacle, of course, to formal arrangements since we have an ambassador accredited to the community. I repeat what I said before. This is the main link that we have with the community at the moment. We have been urging upon the community a reciprocal arrangement under which they would have an office in Ottawa. I understand that, like so many other things, it is financial considerations among others that stand in the way.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—AVAILABILITY OF
ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Mr. Jean-Marie Boisvert (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Since cutbacks in the LIP budget for most ridings are as unexplainable in view of unemployment as the delay in announcing their official acceptance, does the minister intend to increase estimates in the ridings?

[English]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, that matter has been considered by myself and my colleagues. In light of all the other