

*Oral Questions*

Competitive factors being what they are, there may be some markets where prices have been driven down below what has been allowable, and that could be the factor to which the hon. member is referring.

*[Translation]*

INQUIRY WHETHER GASOLINE PRICE INCREASE DUE TO MONOPOLY POSITION OF OIL COMPANIES

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the minister. Every time oil prices go up, either as a result of a wellhead price increase or otherwise, we have seen all other oil companies, any one of the seven sister companies, proportionally raise the price of gas or fuel per gallon.

Should Esso Imperial increase its prices by two cents a gallon, as announced yesterday or the day before yesterday, could the minister make sure, if the other companies do likewise, whether it is not a monopolistic practice as in previous cases.

● (1132)

*[English]*

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned to the hon. member, I am not aware of the announcement on the part of the oil company to which he referred. I will be very pleased to look into it.

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**HARBOURS**

PROPOSED EXPANSION OF ROBERTS BANK—ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

**Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. One of the serious issues in the 1978 Auditor General's report is the questionable use and structuring of information behind the decision-making process for large capital projects. The Minister of Transport gave us the impression that management procedures are now in place within his department to prevent or overcome this weakness as reported in the 1978 report of the Auditor General.

Can the minister assure the House that all factors have been considered properly and openly and have been included in the criteria behind the National Harbours Board announced expansion of Roberts Bank?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I think I can give the hon. member the general assurance he is seeking. I am not quite sure what, specifically, he is dealing with in relation to Roberts Bank. The current issue there is environmental considerations. Any final decision in relation to any facility at Roberts Bank will have to take environmental considerations into account. It could be anticipated that the

[Mr. Gillespie.]

cost and benefit analysis will change, given the spending which may be required in that regard.

**Mr. Huntington:** Mr. Speaker, I suggest the minister examine the letter he gave to my colleague, the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock, in February of this year. Also, I ask him to consider that the market data and projections support the doubling of the coal-handling capabilities of Roberts Bank at this time, but show that potash and sulphur can be handled well into the future by the existing facilities in place at the port of Vancouver.

Can the minister explain why environmental studies have been tampered with and why the National Harbours Board continues to call for expansion well beyond the foreseeable needs of the port?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, obviously there is room for different judgment as to when expansion is required. The hon. member could be critical of planned expansion, and he could be just as critical a couple of years from now if the facilities are not there to handle western products trying to go through the west coast ports. Our judgment has to be made as to when the expansion is right.

I deny that there has been any tampering with environmental studies. Any decision to go ahead with the facility will depend upon a full analysis of the environmental significance of the development plan. The National Harbours Board believes the need is so great that it keeps speaking about wanting to get it ahead, I understand, in terms of its business and task. The decision is not to be made and will not be made until the fullest environmental results are in and taken completely into account.

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**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

SALARY PAID TO NEWSREADER KNOWLTON NASH

**Mr. Marke Raines (Burnaby-Seymour):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State. Is the minister aware, in a time of budgetary restraint and cutbacks, that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is paying a newsreader, to wit, Knowlton Nash of the National News, a salary rumoured to be \$85,000 to \$90,000 a year, not including any fringe benefits which may come his way? That is a higher salary than the Prime Minister of Canada receives.

What steps will the Secretary of State now take to ensure the CBC uses its money more judiciously? Will he now use moral persuasion and ensure that all funds granted the CBC, to wit, more than \$500 million a year, will be used for furthering the broadcasting policy agreed to by all members of the House in 1967 and 1968?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Crosbie:** The minister is on the road to Mandalay.