

Oral Questions

[English]

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, as I think my previous remarks made clear the long-term thrust is to secure for Canadian industry—

Mr. Stanfield: Long-term? We will all be dead.

Mr. Gillespie: —a cost of oil, and petroleum products that flow from oil, lower than the international price.

[Translation]

Mr. Wagner: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary, because the minister addressed his answer to the long term policy. How about the short term?

What has the government done to lower Quebec oil prices below world market prices?

[English]

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the hon. member is talking about last week or the discussions that will be taking place in the near future.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for South Shore on a supplementary.

Mr. Knight: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. member for South Shore will allow me to interrupt for just a moment. The hon. member for Assiniboia rises on a point of order. I will return to the hon. member for South Shore.

Mr. Knight: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is this. In view of the fact the Minister of Finance has tabled the Auditor General's report today, and in view of the fact it shows there has been a loss of parliamentary control over millions of dollars, I wonder whether the House would be prepared to revert to motions to allow the Treasury Board to make an explanation?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for South Shore has the floor. That, of course, is not a point of order.

INQUIRY AS TO INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY TO OFFSET
HIGHER OIL PRICES IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact prices for oil in the Atlantic provinces are at present higher than in the provinces west of the Ottawa Valley line, and noting also that these oil prices in Atlantic Canada are world market prices, does the government now have an industrial strategy in place aimed at offsetting these high prices and, if so, what is the general outline of this industrial strategy?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, that is entirely why the announcement was made some ten days ago by the government with respect to the elements of a national oil policy.

Mr. Crouse: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. When the Prime Minister spoke in the House on energy policy he stated:

[Mr. Wagner.]

We must in the long run allow prices to rise to a price high enough to allow development of the oil sands and other Canadian resources, but not one bit higher.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a statement of policy. We in Atlantic Canada accept the Prime Minister's word, but I should like to know what specific steps the government is now taking to bring oil price levels in the Atlantic provinces and in Quebec below world market prices, and when will these steps be implemented?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, in the last ten days I think the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has outlined a number of measures including the extension of the pipeline to Montreal—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gillespie: —to bring about self-sufficiency for the first time for Canadian users of oil.

Mr. Hees: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is rising on a point of order. This will be the third point of order within the first ten minutes of the question period. I think it is much easier to ask a question. If the hon. member has a point of order he will be recognized for that purpose. I am sure it will be a genuine point of order, after which I will see the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, it is a genuine point of order. You have cautioned the House about spending too much time on points of order during the question period, but the reason is that ministers give no answers whatsoever. We have to ask supplementary after supplementary after supplementary and we still do not get the information that we have a right to get on behalf of the people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: We are getting no information.

Mr. Lawrence: You cannot get blood out of a stone.

● (1500)

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce if he can indicate to the House how a pipeline that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has said will carry 250,000 barrels a day will take care of the price in an area of Canada that consumes about one million barrels a day?

Some hon. Members: Answer!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Kootenay West. I appreciate that a number of hon. members are seeking supplementary questions. The Chair, of course, is quite prepared to return to this subject and allow further supplementaries on this matter.