

tions with Iran, but also with all the other oil suppliers. Last year, Exxon—the owners of Imperial Oil—on the occasion of the Iranian crisis diverted supply destined for Canada coming from Venezuela.

Has the minister been in touch with multinational oil companies, and particularly with Imperial Oil, either directly and personally or through his personal advisers, or the director-general of the Conservative party, who all come from Imperial Oil—

An hon. Member: Come on.

Mr. Crosbie: You are a jerk.

Mr. Lalonde:—as to whether we can be assured by these companies that there will be no diversion of oil supplies coming to Canada from any country, to other destinations?

● (1130)

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member right away that this government will not regard very well and treat very seriously any attempt, on any account, by any company to act to the detriment of this country. I can assure him of that in no uncertain terms, and assure him that we will be watching the matter very carefully with respect to any diversion that is detrimental to our country.

I want to tell the hon. member that according to my information—and I want to bring him up to date with respect to Iran—loading is proceeding in the normal fashion. There are reports with respect to a 5 per cent cutback by Iran, but this should not have a serious effect with regard to international supply.

I want to advise the hon. member, with respect to Canadian supplies, that Gulf Canada—which is the principal importer from Iran in Canada—unloaded a tanker of 2.3 million barrels on November 3 in Canada. Gulf loaded a tanker, the *Vanpet*, on October 15, and this is due to unload in Canada on November 20. Gulf loaded another tanker, the *Vanoil*, on November 6, and this is due to unload on December 14—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please, I wonder if the minister could keep his reply short.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, this is very important.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: The minister has not been in touch with the multinationals to obtain from them an assurance that they will not divert from Canada to other countries to Canada the supply of oil. I urge him to get going and to get those assurances from the multinationals. My question has to do with the situation with regard to the supply in Canada over the winter. Last summer we urged the minister to get going, and he told us there was no problem. Last week he told us the situation was fragile—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must be fair to both sides. If I cannot permit the minister to give long answers, I cannot permit long questions.

Mr. Lalonde: In view of the statement by the minister's own department yesterday that the situation was now extremely fragile and tight, when will the minister set up the Energy Supplies Allocation Board? He said he would, but we are still waiting for a firm decision on when it will be set up. Is it true that he is delaying appointing that board because he wants to amend the act in order to remove the representative of Petro-Canada who is supposed to be on that board, according to the legislation?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, if I may complete my answer to the hon. member's question, let me say that I wanted to point out to him that the next loading from Iran for Canada is due on January 1 and is due to unload on February 5 of next year. This should put the situation in perspective.

The second matter I want to put into perspective for the hon. member is the fact that when I assumed this responsibility, I must say I found the circumstances very unsatisfactory and I immediately moved with respect to other initiatives. If the hon. member had been doing his job in the former government, he would have acted much sooner in connection with the reduction of our exports to the United States from 55,000 barrels a day to provide Canadian sources with additional domestic supplies.

So far as independents are concerned, I have also initiated an investigation on the part of the National Energy Board and they have been in touch with Interprovincial Pipe Line. Interprovincial Pipe Line have now made arrangements to free some space on the line. I have taken initiatives that the previous government refused to take—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to keep reminding the House—I am not laying the blame at the feet of the two participants here, but the House can recognize the fact that it has taken ten minutes to complete the first round of questions, consisting of three questions and three answers.

If we are to continue that on a daily basis, it will be impossible for there to be much participation, and if members later in the question period can ask questions and give answers of a shorter nature, I do not see why it cannot be done in a co-operative way at the outset of the question period.

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ENERGY

OIL IMPORTS FROM MEXICO AND VENEZUELA

Mr. John Evans (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief. My question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Yesterday, in response to the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, the minister indicated that