

Oral Questions

being used by General Motors, but I have already instructed my staff to be in touch with the purchasing executives of General Motors to pursue this very question.

* * *

ENERGY**FEDERAL FUNDS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA COALFIELDS**

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Last night, in the other place, the B.C. representative in cabinet admitted that, contrary to the perception of our colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway, little or no federal government funds will be advanced for the development of B.C. northeast coalfields on terms acceptable to the B.C. government.

Since the government of B.C. has decided to finance the construction of the \$300 million railway spur with revenue from natural gas exports, could the Prime Minister assure the House that Ottawa will not seek to preempt this revenue source and thus jeopardize thousands of new jobs in B.C.?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, the contribution of the federal government to the development of the northeast coal area of British Columbia is going to be in the form mainly of—

Mr. Clark: Talk.

Mr. Pepin:—taking the responsibility for the through-put rate at the port of Prince Rupert. In order to do that, the federal government will construct the facilities at a price which will be close to \$35 million. The federal government has also given a fixed rate to the companies so that they will be in a position to negotiate with the Japanese instantaneously.

There will be another indirect federal contribution in the sense that CN will have to improve the quality of the main line in order to make transportation possible, which is going to be an important investment for CN.

OIL PRICING FORMULA FOR ALL OF CANADA

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is at a meeting today presumably hammering out an oil pricing formula for all Canadians. The previous pricing mechanism in Canada made it possible for certain parts of Canada to get oil at one price, whereas many northerners were paying double the price paid in eastern Canada where oil is being subsidized.

I can give the Prime Minister an example. At Wollaston Lake, in Saskatchewan, the price is 30 cents per litre, compared with 16.5 cents in Montreal and Ottawa. In gallons, that is 75 cents in Ottawa and Montreal, compared with \$1.36. I wonder whether the Prime Minister can tell me whether in any

formula which will evolve from these discussions northerners will be taken into consideration so that they, too, will benefit from any subsidizing program, averaging program, blending program or whatever program evolves, and whether they will get oil at the same price as the rest of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, it seems to me that the hon. member is asking a question which is indeed important in terms of the higher cost of living to be borne by people in parts of the country other than the more populated parts of Canada. That is a question which has interested all governments.

There are special arrangements, but we do not expect that every commodity in every part of the country would be sold at the same price, whether it be gasoline at the pump, bread, wheat or anything else. There is always the cost of transportation which makes a difference, and that applies to petroleum and every other commodity in Canada.

Mr. Korchinski: A supplementary question, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain.

* * *

AGRICULTURE**REQUEST FOR PARTIAL PAYMENT FROM WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION PROGRAM TO ALLEVIATE UNEMPLOYMENT**

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the present and pending unemployment in automobile and truck factories and machinery factories in eastern Canada, would the minister consider making a partial payment from the western grain stabilization plan soon this summer, to help alleviate this unemployment problem in the east and so that we in the west can get enough money from the program from last year to help these fellows get back to work?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I will consider the hon. member's recommendation and discuss it with my colleagues who are also involved with the program.

* * *

TRANSPORT**VANCOUVER HARBOUR—FUNDS TO MAINTAIN FIREBOAT SERVICE**

Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. I am sure the minister has heard of the motion moved last week under