

Oral Questions

To avoid a tragedy such as that which has just stricken the State of Madhya Pradesh in India and which resulted from leaking lethal pesticides responsible for over 1,600 deaths since last Monday, can the Minister tell me and the House what emergency measures are provided to avoid a similar industrial accident and protect the health, security and environment of Canadians?

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the chemical product involved in the Bhopal disaster is not manufactured in Canada. To that extent, a similar incident cannot happen here, but it is true that we do handle very dangerous toxic materials and every kind of emergency measure is provided to cope with disasters. Still, the Bhopal tragedy was so serious that I have asked my department officials to get together with their provincial and private sector colleagues and reassess those emergency measures to make sure that they are effective.

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[English]

ENERGY

VENTURE OFFSHORE DEVELOPMENT COSTS

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, on Monday I asked a question of the Hon. Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, and today I would like to direct this question to him. I mentioned there was a report that indicated the cost of bringing the Venture gas on shore was less than the \$3 billion projected by Venture. Can the Minister now confirm that this report is known to his Department and it was prepared by Marshall, Macklin and Monaghan of Toronto?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF REPORT

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Let me mention to the Minister that this report was commissioned by Petro-Canada. Will the Minister of Energy undertake to table this report in conjunction and consistent with her present status of wanting the Canadian public to have the information Petro-Canada has which is of interest to the Canadian public and the industry in Canada?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I will phone Mr. Dye and see if he has got it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Miss Carney: I can assure the Hon. Member that we are only into our preliminary analysis of the Venture field with the

officials of Mobil. We are working on the basis of that analysis and the numbers which will flow from it.

I am aware of the earlier report but it is not, I believe, the relevant document to be used at this time.

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AUDITOR GENERAL

PETRO-CANADA PURCHASE OF PETROFINA—ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister on a related subject. The Auditor General and this House have had enormous difficulties getting the information which has now been promised to come from Petro-Canada with respect to the Petrofina purchase. Will the Deputy Prime Minister assure the House that other investigations by the Auditor General will not be blocked on the grounds that the background documents needed to carry out these investigations are secret Cabinet papers?

● (1140)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has indicated in the House repeatedly, as has the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that all documents relevant to the audit of the Auditor General are made available to him. In addition to that, the Prime Minister has taken a further step by indicating that Mr. Hopper should be invited to appear before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, chaired by the Hon. Member for Trinity.

I might suggest to her that the Committee, which is master of its own processes, may wish to consider inviting Mr. Dye to be present when Mr. Hopper is testifying, and inviting Mr. Dye to put any questions he pleases to Mr. Hopper when he appears before the Committee.

I do not know what further steps might be taken in order to have a totally open inquiry into the affairs of Petrofina than that vehicle.

ACCESS TO BACKGROUND PAPERS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, will the Deputy Prime Minister assure the House that Mr. Dye is not blocked in a similar way with respect to his investigation of subjects like the F-18 fighter jet purchase, or the purchase of frigates? Will he assure the House that the Auditor General can do his job as a servant of Parliament and have access to background papers, if they are required to do his job?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I reject the implication in the Member's question when he infers that the Auditor General has been blocked with respect to his inquiries into Petrofina-Petro-Canada. We have explained that repeatedly and repeatedly.

Mr. Waddell: Look at what he said.