

day on the subject, I have a quotation from *Hansard* of April 13, 1978 where he said, and I quote:

[*English*]

We—

That is, “if we were in power”.

—would recognize in our national development policy the fact that in the Middle East alone countries are planning to invest more than \$200 billion over the next decade in infrastructure—

He went on to mention what it was.

In this country we have companies like Atco which have succeeded in this kind of world market—

Listen to this:

—despite the obstacles governments have put in their way.

Is that not beautiful? It is not beautiful when you know the kind of obstacle they were to place in the way of Canadian exporters in the last six months!

We would get behind more Canadian companies that have the experience and expertise to serve these markets.

This is a very new definition of “getting behind”. It is not a very nice way of getting behind.

[*Translation*]

Anyhow, I do not need to define the commercial effects of that experience in the short term as my friend the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. Wilson) did it very well: A hiatus, an interruption, a six-month impasse in the efforts done by our businessmen in that part of the world. I did not say that, the minister himself did.

[*English*]

Mr. Wilson: Never used that word “impasse”.

Mr. Pepin: I will find it. It was profusely quoted in the press.

Mr. Wilson: Don't believe everything the press tells you.

Mr. Pepin: The word does not matter. The minister said very clearly that the affairs brought about a suspension of our efforts. He came into the House one day and said, “There is the list of companies which have been damaged”. Everybody knew and he knew that this was only the tip of the iceberg and that there were many who were put into a most uncomfortable position in the process. He knows that, I know it and everybody else knows it.

[*Translation*]

In the long run, what will be the consequences of this experience? We do not know but we intend to ask the minister detailed questions every time we get the opportunity to do so in the months to come. I sympathize with the three ministers responsible for industry, trade and commerce because they went through six months of agony. This is evidenced by the

fact that the senator Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce stated in the Senate—

[*English*]

The record is clear now . . . our commercial interests in the Middle East can pursue their normal course.

Is that not an implication that the normal course was not being pursued? Obviously. Is that not an indication of a—“hiatus”, “impasse” or whatever word you want to use? For six months there was a break in Canadian efforts in this area, and the number of letters, telegrams and messages the ministers received—which we have not seen, of course—should be a clear indication of that.

● (1240)

[*Translation*]

The second extraordinary contribution of the Prime Minister—allow me to smile—to the economic and commercial development of Canada is his ideas on the dismantling of Petro-Canada. They are disastrous because Petro-Canada was in the process of becoming a driving power in the development of our industry, trade and commerce, in the sense of exporting services and equipment throughout the world, in the sense that it gave CIDA a tool for development in Third World countries. So the second contribution of the Prime Minister is extremely harmful.

There is also the hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Miss MacDonald). In her case, it is “Miss MacDonald or the primacy of moral considerations”. I have already spoken about this and shall not come back to it. But everyone knows, or can find out, that she has decided to bring up all the great moral problems of our times. I have already said what I think about it. I have already expressed the wish, on behalf of the Canadian people, who do like their jobs and who like to live decently, that it might be desirable—which is very normal—to find a way to reconcile the pursuit of our spiritual interests with that of our material ones. I am not the only one to worry about her psychological behaviour. I hope, naturally, and for our sake, that she will reflect upon those topics with all the moderation, the level-headedness and wisdom they warrant.

We have another minister of industry and commerce in the person of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Stevens), the king of privatization, the theologian of the return to the private sector, our very own little homebred Ayatollah. If you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, I shall talk a while about privatization which is one of those elements of confusion the government has introduced in the industrial and commercial life of Canada. The spokesmen for the government will ask me: But what does the subject of privatization have to do with the development of trade, industry and commerce? The mere fact that they will put the question is precisely the point I want to make. That is, that they go about this whole operation without concern, without realizing the importance “operation privatization” will have on the development of our industry, trade