

Oral Questions

We all recognize that the most effective solution to this tragedy would be for the attacks to stop and for there to be some sense of security among Kurds so that they could return to the land that was traditionally theirs and live there in peace and security.

What we have been doing has been first of all to send financial assistance. I am pleased to announce today that we are prepared to increase financial assistance through UNICEF and other international organizations to those areas on the border between Iraq and Iran where there is also a crisis.

The other dimension of our response at the moment upon which we are focusing is to take account of the problems that exist with the proposal put forward by the European Community for an enclave. That may not prove acceptable.

For that reason, Canada beginning last Saturday was putting forward an alternative proposal, the details of which I outlined to the House yesterday and which I discussed yesterday afternoon with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

We hope that proposal by Canada, that alternative Canadian proposal, may contribute to a UN presence that would both co-ordinate the delivery of assistance much more reliably and provide some sense of security as to the fate of the Kurds in the region.

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer. I am sure everybody in this House wishes that the problem will be solved as quickly as possible. In the meantime, while the government is considering its options, men, women and children particularly are dying.

Long-standing Canadian tradition has been to meet our responsibilities as a global citizen and accept people from around the world who are suffering personal physical torment. Canada's past response to the plight of the Vietnamese after the fall of Saigon offers a good example.

While the minister is considering these various other options, will he assure the House that this request of the President of Turkey that countries around the world accept refugees will be considered on an urgent basis so

that Canada can take a leading role immediately in rescuing people from certain death?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think the question certainly reflects the urgency the government feels around responding to the situation that exists with the Kurds.

We have certainly actively looked at the possibility of assisting through some refugee program. At the moment I would regard the situation as being volatile for determining what the final outcome may be.

It is certainly our intention to be in touch with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. I know that anything that will be done will have to be co-ordinated on an international scale. As I said yesterday I am not ruling anything in, but I am not ruling anything out either. We certainly are actively looking at this matter.

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PETRO-CANADA

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of energy. It relates to the matters which led to the resignation of Premier Vander Zalm.

Bill Hopper, chairman of Petro-Canada, told the Hughes commission in B.C. of his dealings with Premier Vander Zalm, and I quote: "a premier of a province demands some attention" and further that the premier's involvement "helped open the door for" the purchasers with respect to the Fantasy Gardens Petro-Canada lot.

Will he tell the House if there are federal guidelines dealing with the sale of public assets by Crown corporations and if they were applied in this case?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member will know, Petro-Canada operates as a commercial interest. That is the manner in which its mandate is fulfilled.

I simply point out to the hon. member that in an article in *The Vancouver Sun* of April 4 it is indicated that federal Liberal energy critic David Kilgour said Hopper couldn't be blamed for taking the call from Vander Zalm.