

Oral Questions

might be interested. We have no intention of changing that policy. If Secretary Morton is suggesting in reference to a continental energy policy that we should enter into an arrangement whereby there would be not only a pooling of the assets of the continent but a pooling of the shortages as well, clearly that is a policy which this government would not intend to follow.

Mr. Stanfield: Is the government of Canada making any proposals to the United States at this time with regard to energy, and has the minister any comment to make on the remark of a senior U.S. official, as reported on CBC radio last evening, that some people in the Canadian government are saying one thing in private and quite a different thing in public?

• (1110)

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I had not heard that comment but I do not consider it to be a just comment. The only discussion we have going at the present time in the energy field is with regard to the question of security of supply for the eastern Canadian market in the event of a crisis in the international oil market cutting off supplies to eastern Canadian refineries. Otherwise we have no discussions on a general energy policy going on with the United States at this time.

SECURITY OF SUPPLY FOR MONTREAL AND DISTRICT
MARKET—CONSULTATION WITH QUEBEC ON RATIONING
PLAN IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, on security of supply for Montreal and the surrounding marketing district. In view of the panic that has hit the United States in the last two days and the rationing of fuel in the northeastern United States, has the minister reached the conclusion that it would be a wise policy to warn the people of Montreal and the marketing district of Montreal that if there is any cut-off in the Portland pipeline to help the Americans out of their emergency the people would have only about 60 days supply?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the shortage in the United States is related to the mid-continental rather than the northeastern market. We see no prospect of the Portland to Montreal pipeline being cut off. We are confident that there will be adequate supplies not only in the Montreal refinery area but elsewhere in Canada for Canadian consumption.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): In prefacing my next question I should like to say to the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member cannot preface the question; he should ask the question.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): I will rephrase my question, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister seen fit to consult with the government of Quebec in order to arrange a rationing plan in case there is such an emergency?

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, we have had discussions with both the office of emergency preparedness in the United States and with other interested parties in this regard. Rationing is certainly one of the possibilities that could occur if, I might emphasize in this regard, that would be if the offshore feed stock was cut off because of an international oil crisis, not because of any crisis in the United States. As I say, at the moment we do not anticipate any difficulty in the Montreal refining area arising from this winter's problem in the United States.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain): Is the minister aware of the precedent that was set in 1942 when the Americans broke contracts under which they were supplying electrical energy to Ontario during the war when we needed it?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting precedent but I do not see the relevance to the present situation.

OIL—NATURE AND PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH
UNITED STATES AND COMMITMENTS, IF ANY—REQUEST
FOR SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Mr. Speaker. In view of the statement of Mr. George Lincoln, director of the White House office of emergency preparedness before a congressional committee that while the Canadian government was not prepared to discuss a continental energy policy at the moment it was discussing individual energy items, and particularly that discussions with respect to oil have been going on since last December, and in view of Mr. Lincoln's statement that these discussions to use his words, "have achieved significant progress" will the minister tell the House the nature of these negotiations, what stage these negotiations have reached and what commitments, if any, have been made by the Canadian government with respect to oil supplies from Canada to the United States?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the negotiation the hon. member is questioning is the one I have already referred to, namely, the problem of insecurity of supply for the eastern Canadian market arising from a cut-off, say, due to a mid-east crisis or economic action by the mid-eastern or other OPEC countries. No commitments of any kind have been made in this regard, but basically there have been these discussions related to a contingency plan in case there is an international shortage imposed either for political or economic reasons.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, that is not the context in which Mr. Lincoln made the statement to the congressional committee. Having in mind the experience of the past in regard to the Columbia River Treaty and other agreements which were signed by the government and only sent to parliament for ratification afterwards, is the minister prepared to give the House the assurance that no commitments will be made with respect to the energy resources of Canada and their export to the United States