

Following the federal-provincial conference on mining policy, Quebec Finance Minister Massé has maintained that the federal government should withdraw from the uranium mining industry. Did the minister communicate with the provincial minister about this?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did discuss the matter with the minister and I have also looked into his communication.

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Contrary to the agreements signed by the provinces, does the minister consider that the role of the federal government is to act simply as a customs officer when it comes to the export of uranium?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): No, Mr. Speaker. I have informed the provincial ministers that the federal government does not intend to relinquish its jurisdiction over uranium.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

* * *

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF HIS EMINENCE ABBAS HOVEYDA,
PRIME MINISTER OF IRAN

Mr. Speaker: Before carrying on with the question period may I direct the attention of hon. members to the arrival in our galleries at just this moment of a very distinguished visitor, His Eminence Abbas Hoveyda the Prime Minister of Iran.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

GRAIN

PROPOSED CONTINUOUS OPERATION OF DRYING FACILITIES
AT TERMINALS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice who reports for the Wheat Board. Since it is a known fact, or an estimated fact—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Korchinski: Since it has been estimated that 26 per cent of all the grain in western Canada is either tough or damp, are the drying facilities at the terminals, particularly those at Thunder Bay, working round the clock on a seven-day-a-week basis?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice): With the slowdown in the movement of grain out of Thunder Bay there may have been some difficulty recently about unloading at maximum capacity, but I can assure the hon. member that the Wheat Board is very conscious of this

Oral Questions

problem and is urging farmers to do a lot of the drying themselves. The board is also making sure that the various drying facilities both inland and at the ports are being used to capacity.

Mr. Korchinski: Since it is a known fact that it is more economic to dry the grain at the terminals than to do so in private drying facilities, will the minister ask the Wheat Board and those concerned to endeavour to operate these facilities on a seven-day-a-week round the clock basis?

Mr. Lang: As I have indicated, even if the facilities are being operated in that fashion, a significant amount of drying on the farm will still be required. The fact of the matter at present is that it is more economic to dry the grain in that way—recent changes in price spreads have widened the differential in price between damp and dry grain, so it is more profitable for the farmer to dry it.

* * *

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE, VANCOUVER—
GOVERNMENT POSITION ON CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Would the hon. lady please advise us whether plans for the new environmental centre in Vancouver promised by the former minister of the environment during the July election campaign are continuing and, if so, whether they are available?

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of the Environment): The hon. member is no doubt aware that some restraint has to be exercised in capital expenditure—

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mrs. Sauvé: This particular expenditure is presently under review and will be looked at in the context of general government expenditures.

* * *

HOUSING

ELIGIBILITY OF PURCHASERS RECEIVING PROVINCIAL
ASSISTANCE FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR GRANT

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. Would the minister inform the House whether or not recipients of housing assistance under provincial housing programs through which the cost of homes has been reduced, in some cases, to the \$18,000-\$25,000 level, will be eligible for the \$500 tax-free cash grant?

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Without understanding the question fully, I would suggest that if it is a first-time purchase and if it complies with the other criteria, these people will be eligible.