

*Oral Questions***PETRO-CANADA**

## SALE OF SHARES TO PUBLIC—PRESS REPORT

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. A few years ago a Conservative Government announced its intentions to privatize Petro-Canada. That same Government lost a subsequent federal election.

According to news reports today, the present Conservative Government is about to move in that direction once again.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** Having heard his quaint voices from the past behind him, and considering that in the 1984 election there was no mandate for privatizing Petro-Canada, not a single speech made by the Leader of the Conservative Party in the 1984 election mentioned this, and considering that Petro-Canada is desired to be kept in the public sector by Canadians today, will the Minister comment on this press report and assure us that this abominable course of direction will not be taken by the Government?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, first I may remind the Hon. Member that the Canadian Socialist Party, better known as the NDP, is probably the one that suggested creating a Crown corporation in the oil sector, and it has never won an election. Its suggestion never brought it to power, Mr. Speaker.

Second, this Government has a mandate to guarantee a market in the energy sector. Since 1984, this Government, in accordance with its mandate, has instructed Petro-Canada to operate on a commercial basis, and Petro-Canada has been doing just that, for the greater benefit of Canadians and Petro-Canada customers, since 1984.

Third, this Government also announced it would introduce a policy to privatize Crown corporations that are not considered to have a major policy role in Canada.

Fourth, since Petro-Canada is already operating on a commercial basis, we can conclude there is no major political role for Petro-Canada.

That is why, although the Cabinet has yet to make a decision at this time, the question of Petro-Canada is still being examined, both in my Department and in other government agencies.

• (1430)

[*English*]

## POSITION OF UNITED STATES SENATOR

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the Minister will keep that up and will say all the things outside the House in the subsequent election campaign that he just said inside the House.

I repeat that the Prime Minister, when leading the Opposition, made not a single reference to privatizing Petro-Canada during the 1984 election campaign.

Since certain U.S. Senators and Governors have recently objected to the Canadian tradition of having public-sector involvement in the economy, and specifically since Senator Baucus in a recent speech called such intervention a form of subsidy, will the Minister now admit that one of the real reasons the Government is about to re-run this old policy that is unacceptable to Canadians is recent pressure from the United States to do so? Will he admit that?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Socialist Party is welcome to visit the riding of Frontenac at any time—before, during or after the election campaign—to discuss whatever he wants, including Petro-Canada.

As for the stand taken by certain U.S. senators or private citizens, I am not in the habit of taking orders from other countries.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**ENERGY**

## PRICE OF NATURAL GAS

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I did mention that there was no commitment to privatize Petro-Canada in the last election campaign, but I do have, from the Conservative policy campaign book of 1984, a statement which I would ask the Minister to comment on to see if he will maintain this. With reference to a Conservative Government, the handbook said:

We will adopt market sensitive pricing for exported natural gas, while ensuring that Canadians always pay less than their American neighbours—

That was from the Conservative Party campaign commitment of 1984.

In light of the free trade agreement the Minister has entered into with the United States and recent policy statements, will he explain why the Conservatives have completely abandoned their commitment to Canadians to have lower prices?

**Mr. Nystrom:** Lyin' Brian, lyin' Brian.

**Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to talk—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Shields:** We know where you got that one Eddie, from Bob White.

**Mr. Riis:** It's out of your handbook.