

[Translation]

CRUDE OIL—GUARANTEES GOVERNMENT WILL OBTAIN FROM  
REFINERIES RESPECTING CANADIAN SUPPLY TO  
INDEPENDENTS

**Mr. Pierre Bussi  res (Charlesbourg):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Ressources has just indicated that as a result of representations made to the National Energy Board, it is now possible for eastern independent distributors to obtain Canadian crude. This is all very well, Mr. Speaker, but according to my information, the independents who have obtained western Canada crude through the Interprovincial Pipe Line have not yet been able to find a refiner willing to refine this crude oil in Montreal. What action has the minister taken? What guarantees has he obtained, what firm commitment has he obtained from the refiners? First, did he get the assurance that they will refine the crude oil obtained by the independents and second, that they will also supply heating oil to Quebec independents?

[English]

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know, from his brief experience as a parliamentary secretary, that the department is in constant touch with regard to the whole question of supply. He will know that an initiative was taken by my predecessor, the energy minister in the previous government, with regard to an inquiry into the supply for independents. That particular report languished with the previous government; they apparently had to wait until after the election to release it.

I moved immediately to release the report. I distributed it to the parties involved, indicating to them in no uncertain terms that we were going to look very carefully at the whole question of allocation to the independents, and that there would be no attempt to increase the market portion by any of the refiners and terminal operators. I simply want to point out I followed that up with a telex during the month of August, in which I very clearly pointed out the rules of the game as far as terminal operators and refiners are concerned.

[Translation]

REQUEST GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE REFINERIES WILL SUPPLY  
INDEPENDENTS

**Mr. Pierre Bussi  res (Charlesbourg):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. I just reminded the hon. minister of some facts: first, that if the independents get crude oil from the west, it is thanks to the minister's initiative, and I commend him for it—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. If the hon. member has a supplementary, would he put it now?

**Mr. Bussi  res:** What will the minister do now to ensure that refiners will, indeed, refine the crude oil, because crude oil cannot be used in furnaces, that is the problem? Also, what

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assurance can he give us that refiners will supply independents with heating oil?

[English]

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I have tried to point out to the hon. member, and to hon. members generally, initiatives I have taken with regard to making crude available to the independents in the province of Quebec. If the hon. member has any specific instance that he wants to bring to my attention—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The hon. member can talk in general terms and rhetoric; he can make an allegation. I simply say that if he wants to have a particular situation looked into, if he brings it to my attention he can rest assured that I will give it the most serious attention and do what I can to alleviate any isolated incident.

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### VETERANS AFFAIRS

#### REQUEST FOR FULL-TIME MINISTER

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. In view of the strong and justifiable request by veterans across Canada to have their own full-time Minister of Veterans Affairs, and because it is essential that the Canadian Armed Forces have a full-time minister, when is the Prime Minister going to split the present dual departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs and give a full-time minister to each department?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the government, the veterans and the armed forces of this country are very fortunate to have a Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of National Defence as competent as the hon. Allan McKinnon who is able to carry out these dual responsibilities.

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

**Mr. Hopkins:** Mr. Speaker, we are not questioning the ability of the Minister of National Defence and Veterans Affairs; we are questioning the inability of the Prime Minister to appoint ministers.

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

**Mr. Hopkins:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the Prime Minister's decision to give only one minister to these two departments indicate that this is the first move to phase out the Department of Veterans Affairs; and, if not, why does the Prime Minister obviously continue treating these two very important departments, these two people-oriented departments, as minor priorities on his list?

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I noted through the last Parliament the hon. member's great concern about the inability of