

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**PIPELINES****NORTHERN PIPELINE—GOVERNMENT POLICY ON EXPORT OF GAS TO U.S. DURING INITIAL CONSTRUCTION**

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council as the designated minister for the northern gas pipeline. Press reports quote the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce as having told the Alberta chamber of commerce that he favours the export of gas to the United States during the initial stages of the Alaska gas pipeline and that any swap arrangement would involve paying the going price. He is quoted as having said:

● (1422)

We'll have to buy it back at the going price at the time, if we elect to buy it back.

I want, therefore, to ask the President of the Privy Council whether the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce was enunciating government policy in respect of the export of gas to the United States during the initial period of the construction of the northern pipeline.

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. gentleman, as he knows, before any such export can be undertaken there would have to be hearings not only by the National Energy Board but also by the Alberta authorities, and none of these events has taken place up to the present time. I would conclude, therefore, that the situation is still quite speculative on that point.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, surely the minister is better informed than that. In view of the fact that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission of the United States has given conditional approval to an agreement by which the Canadian company's subsidiary is selling gas to the American company which is to own the American portion of the line, is the minister telling the House that he knows nothing about the fact that this approval has been given and that this application has been made to the FERC?

I ask the minister whether any consultation has been held with him, his officials or the government, in any shape or form, regarding this conditional approval which has been sought and given in respect of the export of gas with the provision of the possibility of a swap arrangement.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, no consultations have been held with me or, to my knowledge, with the commissioner of the northern pipeline or any of his officials. I was referring to what would be required in Canada in order to provide for export of the type mentioned. I was not in any way disputing the hon. member's comments about what was happening in the United States.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the National Energy Board is a

[Mr. Chrétien.]

regulatory body whose sole function is to recommend to the government the amount of gas or oil which can safely be exported, and that the final decision lies with the cabinet both as to the amount of gas or oil to be exported and the terms under which it will be exported, I ask the minister whether the government has worked out a policy. In view of the fact the two companies which are to build the pipeline have already applied for and received permission to import gas into the United States, what is the government's policy in respect of price? Are these companies to be allowed to sell Alberta gas to the United States partner, and then Canada will buy that gas back from Alaska at a price which will be \$1 or \$2 per thousand cubic feet higher? Surely the minister has worked out a policy and surely this House has the right to know what that policy is.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I believe it might be more appropriate for the hon. member to address his questions to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, who has the National Energy Board under his authority. It seems to me the hon. gentleman is premature in putting his questions, when applications have not come forward to the National Energy Board nor, to my knowledge, have applications been submitted to the Alberta board in order to undertake these arrangements. The hon. member is asking about a policy that in the first instance has to be developed by the regulatory authorities.

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[Translation]

**FISHERIES****METHOD OF SETTLING DISPUTE WITH REDFISH FISHERMEN OF ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE**

**Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski):** In the absence of the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment, my question is directed to his parliamentary secretary.

Considering that redfish fishermen from the Îles-de-la-Madeleine will not go to sea until the government gives them a guarantee of 2 cents for their take, is the government aware of the problem and what decision will it take to solve that dispute between the fishermen and the government?

● (1427)

[English]

**Mr. Hugh A. Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I will take notice of the hon. member's question. I am not aware of the subject that he has raised.