

which, I repeat, in terms of the questioner himself, is not astonishingly high.

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[Translation]

#### ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

##### FIREARMS CONTROL PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR PROGRESS REPORT

**Mr. Albert Béchard (Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General.

With regard to the restricted firearms recall campaign undertaken by the Canadian government and more particularly by his department, could the minister tell the House and the Canadian public whether it is true that this campaign has had disappointing results in the province of Quebec? At the same time, could he indicate whether this campaign is having encouraging results in other parts of Canada?

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for bringing to the attention of the House this program which, I suggest, should be promoted, and I urge all members to boost the publicity for this program with a view to ensuring the progress of this program which has been in effect since November 1.

I hasten to indicate to the hon. member and to the House that indeed we are very much encouraged by the public response to this program. We have received over 5,330 firearms from Canadian individuals, either for registration or for ultimate disposal. This is a very encouraging figure and the answers are coming in at an increasingly faster rate due to a very effective advertising campaign.

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[English]

#### REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

##### FEASIBILITY STUDY ON COAL MINE IN DONKIN, N.S.

**Mr. Andy Hogan (Cape Breton-East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, I should like to address my question to the parliamentary secretary.

Most recently, the Cape Breton Development Corporation presented to DREE the first phase of the feasibility study on a new coal mine outside Glace Bay called the Donkin area. Would the parliamentary secretary confirm this, and will he table it in the House? If he cannot do that, will he table it with members of the regional development committee and indicate when the more important and crucial second phase of the study is expected to be completed?

**Mr. Donald Wood (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question, and I will take notice of it.

#### Oral Questions

**Mr. Hogan:** Mr. Speaker, I expected that the minister would be here for these questions. Will the parliamentary secretary also take notice of the fact that there are very strong rumours in the Cape Breton area that, because of difficulty regarding the coal preparation plant producing coking coal, this year we may not be able to provide enough coal to fulfil the orders of the Steel Company of Canada and Dofasco, thereby putting the corporation in a bad position? Will he ask the minister to comment in that regard, because this is very crucial to the future of the coal industry?

**Mr. Wood:** I certainly will, Mr. Speaker.

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#### THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

##### PETRO-CANADA PURCHASE OF PACIFIC PETROLEUMS SHARES—FINANCIAL LIABILITY OF GOVERNMENT

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for the purpose of seeking clarification. Is it his position that the financial liabilities incurred by Petro-Can, or any of its subsidiaries, which the Prime Minister referred to as a Crown agency, are in no way financial liabilities of the Government of Canada, and the Government of Canada will not ultimately be responsible in connection with those liabilities? Is that his position?

● (1442)

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that there is a contingent liability as far as the Crown is concerned. There has never been any question that Petro-Canada is an agent of the Crown and that, acting as an agent of the Crown, there is that contingent liability. It was made perfectly clear in my answer that there is no taxpayers' money involved in this transaction in any way, nor were there any express government guarantees.

I went to some lengths yesterday to indicate that the section of the Petro-Canada act which provided for government guarantees was a section of the act that was not used. There were no government guarantees nor taxpayers' money used in that transaction.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if at some time the minister would explain why it has taken me three days to get that information from him.

I would like to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister and ask him why, in light of the answer the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has just given, the Deputy Prime Minister, answering on behalf of the Prime Minister on November 14, said with respect to these arrangements of Petro-Canada, "It does not represent in any way a demand on government resources." Was that a misleading answer by the Deputy Prime Minister, in these circumstances?