

table this information has not been obtained from the other parties concerned.

Mr. Marshall: Then I ask that it be withdrawn, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Dropped.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the remaining notices of motion stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Laprise: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Abitibi on a question of privilege.

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege refers to motions for production of papers. On April 18, 1973, the government agreed to produce the papers related to the notice of motion for production of papers No. 203. But, these papers have not yet been produced. I therefore ask the government when it intends to fulfil the agreement of April 18, 1973?

[English]

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Abitibi has raised a point which affects him and all other hon. members who have had motions accepted by the government. The problem we are having in preparing these papers is that they must be translated into the two official languages. We have got into bottlenecks in some departments in getting this material out, but I can assure the hon. member that this matter has been a considerable concern of mine as well as of the departments. We hope to have the translations completed as soon as possible once the new system is in line.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENERGY

PROPOSED CUTBACK IN NATURAL GAS SUPPLY BY WEST COAST TRANSMISSION TO BRITISH COLUMBIA THIS WINTER—FILLING OF BOARD VACANCIES

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who I know is very fleet of foot. It concerns a report that West Coast Transmission will be cutting back on the supply of gas to British Columbia customers by 10 per cent on peak demand this winter as a result of some difficulty with one of the suppliers to West Coast Transmission. Has the minister been in touch with the National Energy Board and is he satisfied that this cutback is necessary or whether the cutback could not be made in the gas exported by West Coast Transmission in order to give British Columbia customers priority?

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I saw the president of that company yesterday afternoon and he informed me of the facts referred to in the news report this morning. I have indeed been in touch with the board along the lines suggested by the Leader of the Opposition and I shall be seeking the board's advice on handling this problem. It is related to a structural fault in one of the supplying fields.

Mr. Stanfield: Despite the very substantial reserves of natural gas in western Canada, is the supply system as authorized and approved by the National Energy Board so precarious that some difficulty developing with one supplier of gas creates this threatened shortage for British Columbia?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to canvass that question with the board. I would remind the hon. gentleman that this difficulty relates to the West Coast system as opposed to the Trans-Canada system which is hooked into very much larger reserves, but I think it is a valid question.

Mr. Stanfield: Since the minister has referred the matter to the National Energy Board, has he any explanation why the board now consists of five members when the statute provides that the government shall appoint seven, and why the board has been without a chairman for more than two months in a situation of great difficulty and importance in the energy field?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I hope to make some announcement in this regard in the relatively near future.

ASSURANCE TO BRITISH COLUMBIA OF ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF NATURAL GAS THIS WINTER

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. In view of the request of the British Columbia government for some assurance from the minister that they will have an adequate supply of natural gas this winter and that British Columbia customers will be given priority over exports, has the minister been able to give that assurance to the British Columbia government?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Not yet, Mr. Speaker. As I have indicated to the Leader of the Opposition, upon my return this morning I immediately put the question to the National Energy Board. I received, of course, a telegram to the same effect from the Attorney General of British Columbia. I hope to be able to respond both to the House and to that gentleman at an early date.

Mr. Douglas: In view of the fact that the National Energy Board gave export licences to West Coast Transmission, would the minister undertake to find out why, before giving such export licences, the National Energy Board did not assure itself that West Coast Transmission had adequate reserves to meet a contingency such as that which has arisen?