

I repeat to him that we have made all the representations that as far as we are concerned we have been asked to make—if the hon. member would let me finish—and in so far as we have been able to determine, we have gone through all the channels and made all the representations that we either have been asked to make or which appeared to be open to us to make. I repeat, if the hon. member has been advised by the Swiss of some method through which this information can be obtained, we are as anxious to have it as he is. I think it would have been sensible for him to specify what those methods are. I gave him an assurance that if they are open to us, we will pursue them immediately.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

SALE OF CANDU REACTORS—RCMP INVESTIGATION INTO POSSIBLE ILLEGALITIES

Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. Would the minister report to the House and the people of Canada on the investigations undertaken by the RCMP with respect to nuclear sales and the possibility of breaches of Canadian law? I ask this question because the investigation has apparently been going on since the early part of 1977. Has the Solicitor General apprised himself of the situation, and what can he report to us today?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise the hon. gentleman that an investigation has been conducted by the RCMP. It is ongoing and is by no means complete, as we have encountered the difficulties described by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, namely, lack of co-operation from the areas within which the amounts are alleged to have been deposited.

Mr. Alexander: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware that it has been reported that Dr. Marvulli, a federal state prosecutor in Genoa, Italy, has raised questions about the fairness of the investigation being carried on by the RCMP which leaves much to be desired? If he is not aware of this, would he follow this allegation through the usual channels in order to determine what type of investigation has been carried on? Would he find out how the RCMP is conducting the investigation and whether inquiries overseas, particularly in Italy, leave something to be desired?

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I would be very surprised indeed if there were any unfairness in the investigation being conducted by the RCMP. As the hon. member knows, offshore the RCMP is rather limited in its operations, because we are not engaged in offensive investigations or intelligence-gathering. In this particular instance, we have to rely in large measure on the co-operation of foreign agencies.

Mr. Alexander: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned the name of Dr. Marvulli. Would the minister keep that name in mind? Also, would he approach his depart-

mental officials and, in particular, the RCMP to determine whether there is any truth in the allegation about the fairness of the investigation which apparently, according to reports, leaves something to be desired?

Mr. Blais: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage the hon. gentleman to give particulars of the information he is advancing, which he will recognize is of a very general nature indeed.

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ENERGY

INCREASE IN PRICE OF OIL—EFFECT ON COST OF LIVING

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister because it concerns over-all government policy rather than that of a single department. I refer to the fact that as a result of the government allowing the price of oil to be raised on January 1, the price of gasoline for cars and trucks, the price of home heating fuel and the price of natural gas will go up tomorrow. It is estimated this will increase the cost of living index by a full percentage point, and it is already more than 50 per cent higher than the 6 per cent increase forecast by the Minister of Finance.

● (1427)

I ask the Prime Minister, therefore, if he is sufficiently interested in keeping down the cost of living and relieving the hardship which its increase will involve, to rescind the increase in the price of oil and leave the price where it was.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Of course, Mr. Speaker, we are interested in keeping the cost of living down, particularly in energy areas. The hon. gentleman certainly remembers that right after the OPEC decision in the fall of 1973, this government acted, and has continued to act, to ensure that the price of energy—of gas and oil—in Canada would be below the world market price. We have all said at some point that if we wanted investment to continue, as well as exploration, we would have to trend toward world prices. But for four years we have been below world prices, and we will continue for another short period of time to be below the price in world markets.

Therefore, the effect on the cost of living of the OPEC nations' decision has not yet been fully borne by the Canadian consumer. This seems to be an element that the hon. gentleman always forgets when he talks about the actions of the federal government. The action taken by the federal government has not been to increase the price of petroleum; it has been to keep it below world prices.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is this: In view of the fact that a very large part of the petroleum products we consume is produced in this country and not bought from OPEC countries, we have the opportunity to keep prices at a much lower level than they have been kept. I ask the Prime Minister if he