

Oral Questions

Mr. Stanfield: I take it from the answer given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that he did not make inquiries himself with respect to the advice being given by the technical advisory committee and that he did not feel it necessary to interest himself in the prospect of oil from non-Arabian sources being cut back to the extent of 125,000 barrels a day and the principle upon which this cut-back might be based?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I have the utmost confidence in my colleague—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Sharp: I have full confidence in the statements he has made in the House and I repeat what I have said before, that the minister is, it seems to me, acting in a very prudent way which should have the support of all parties in the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

PROPOSED ACTION BY ALBERTA TO INCREASE CRUDE OIL PRICE TO ALL CANADIAN CONSUMERS—DISCUSSION WITH AND REACTION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources on a subject of direct concern to all the people of Canada arising out of the announcement by the Conservative premier of Alberta yesterday of certain steps that his government is taking and is intending to take for the purpose of increasing the price of crude oil to all the consumers of Canada. Have the steps proposed by the Conservative government of Alberta been discussed with the federal government, and what is the reaction of the federal government to these steps by Sheik Lougheed of Alberta?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, in the course of the discussions in the last several weeks we have received a general description of the legislative framework proposed by the premier of Alberta. We have expressed our concern on two principal points, namely, that the structure of such legislation should not interfere with the general responsibility of the government of Canada for trade and commerce within the country and, second, the possible impact of these proposals from the standpoint of federal taxation and equalization. There are obviously a number of serious and important questions to be discussed in this connection. It is for this reason we have continued discussions and will be expecting to discuss the further implications both this week and next.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, since the legislation proposed by the Conservative government of Alberta means a very hefty increase in the price of all oil products to Canadians, may I ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources whether he has agreed to lift the price freeze as of January

[Mr. Sharp.]

31 and has agreed with the government of Alberta on price increases after that date and, if so, at what level?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, there has been an exchange of views on these questions but there has been no agreement as to the position taken on either side.

Mr. Lewis: Since the future of Canada and not merely the game in this House is involved in the question of energy—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Woolliams: Who is playing the game?

Mr. Lewis: Obviously all the Conservatives in this House support the Conservative government of Alberta on higher prices.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order, please. The hon. member for York South has the floor.

Mr. Lewis: In view of the fact, as I have said, that the future of this country is involved in the supply of energy and in the price that is gouged out of the Canadian public by the multinational corporations, with the assistance of the Conservatives in this country—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order, please. It seems to me the hon. member should ask a question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe the hon. member for Athabasca is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Yewchuk: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member who is supposed to be asking a question, but I think that the leader of a national party should not promote disunity in the country by making childish references to the premier of a province.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would hope that we might try to return to the question period. The hon. member might ask his question now so that we may make some headway.

Mr. Lewis: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but that last statement on an alleged point of order is not going to go unanswered.

Some hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is rising on a point of order and will be recognized.

● (1430)

Mr. Lewis: The fact is, Mr. Speaker—