

presentation to myself and several of my cabinet colleagues, and I stated at that meeting—as I state to the hon. member now—that even if we financed some producers at 10 per cent, there is no light at the end of the tunnel for some of the operations in which they are involved. We have to have better marketing programs, etc. We are moving as fast as we can with the Farm Credit Corporation. I am surprised that the hon. member is so concerned because the bill was waiting in this House for two weeks while the bells rang, and nothing was done. We could not go ahead with the bill.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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ENERGY

DEVELOPMENT OF PEACE RIVER TAR SANDS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources I would like to address my question to his parliamentary secretary. In the past few weeks the department has received several telegrams from people in the Peace River country who are concerned about the development of the Peace River tar sands project. I would like to know what the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is doing to see that this particular program goes ahead.

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member's concern about that particular project, yes, the department has received the telexes. At the present time it is considering the purport of the suggestions made in those telexes, and when we complete our consideration of this particular problem, the hon. member will be notified in due course.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, Canadians desperately need jobs right now, and this particular megaproject would provide several thousand jobs for Canadians.

TIMING OF DECISION

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the parliamentary secretary. How quickly can we expect some kind of response?

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I would like to be able to give a response today; however, when the consideration is completed, the hon. member will be notified in due course.

Oral Questions

NATIONAL RESOURCES

FILING OF PRESS RELEASE WITH REFERENCE TO SUPREME COURT ON OWNERSHIP OF HIBERNIA OIL FIELD

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice, if he will stop hiding behind the curtain and come into the House.

An hon. Member: Here he is.

Mr. Cousineau: Go ahead.

Mr. Nielsen: My question to the Minister of Justice concerns the propriety of the government in the filings it made before the Supreme Court of Canada with respect to the reference by the governor in council concerning the Hibernia field off Newfoundland. I have in my hand a copy of the notice of motion filed May 20, which sets forth that an application will be heard next Friday or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard. Together with that notice of motion, for which no provision that I am aware of exists in the rules of the Supreme Court of Canada, is filed a government press release which sets forth the government's propaganda on why it is taking this action.

• (1150)

Under what authority did the government file a copy of its press release with the documents usually permitted for filing in the Supreme Court of Canada, and what purpose did it have in filing the press release? Does the minister not now think that the contents of that two-page press release may well prejudice the hearing of the notice of motion when it comes before Mr. Justice Ritchie?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development): Madam Speaker, I am not aware of this detail. As way my duty as Attorney General of Canada, I filed the petition in the Supreme Court of Canada. On the question of the sustaining documents, if there is an explanation of why it is called a press release—I do not know if it was filed but I will check that. I think it was very important to proceed in that matter. Now the court will decide, so I have no further comment to make.

As to the remarks of the hon. member, everyone knows that he likes to engage in dirt so I will not speak at his level.

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, I will overlook the intemperate remarks of the minister.

REQUEST THAT PRESS RELEASE BE REMOVED FROM COURT DOCKET

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, I have in my hand a copy of the press release dated May 19, cited at St. John's Newfoundland, bearing the stamp of the Supreme Court of Canada and filed May 20, 1982, under number 17096, which is the number of the Supreme Court of Canada docket.