

Oral Questions

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, we have been studying with the interested provinces the possibility of bringing Rocky Mountain coal to the consuming centres of central Canada. At the moment the figures on that are under careful study. We have also been studying other means of bringing it east, such as a coal slurry in crude oil.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**STEPS TO ASSIST CHILEAN REFUGEES WISHING TO COME TO CANADA**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Perhaps I might be permitted to preface it by saying I am glad to see him back in the House after his trip.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, a week ago last Friday the minister told the House that teams were being sent to Santiago, Panama and Honduras for the purpose of examining the question of Chilean and other refugees from Chile and their admission to Canada. Can the minister now tell the House what report he has received from these teams and what steps are being taken to carry out his undertaking, given then and previously, to deal with these refugees in the same humanitarian manner as refugees from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Uganda were previously dealt with?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the team that went to Chile, Panama and Honduras has now made a preliminary report by cable. The team itself, or at least the head of the team, Mr. Geoff Pearson, is returning to Canada tonight, and the reports that they are making will be considered this week by the cabinet.

Mr. Brewin: Will the minister report to the House after he has received these messages from Mr. Pearson and the others?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY**STUDY OF OIL AND GAS PATENTS IN ORDER TO REDUCE USE OF PRODUCTS**

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Could he tell the House whether he intends having a serious study made of all patents for devices aimed at reducing energy consumption, especially as regards oil products, in order to avoid the useless spending of gasoline and gas and to make the necessary savings during this pseudo-shortage period?

[Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain).]

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my department is now studying the Patent Act, and I shall bring the very interesting question asked by the hon. member to the attention of the officials concerned and try to determine whether this study can be completed.

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[English]

WILDLIFE**ACTION TO PRESERVE POLAR BEARS**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, time is of the essence in connection with the question I am about to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It has to do with the survival of some of our most wonderful animals in the north. The United States Congress has given approval to do everything it can to assure survival of these animals which face extinction unless action is taken. I may say that this matter was raised earlier by the hon. member for Edmonton Centre but nothing complete came from the discussions regarding polar bears. From all over this nation members are receiving letters, and fears are being expressed concerning the future of these animals, the most wonderful animals of the north. Will the minister advise what action is being taken and, in particular whether any arrangements have been made with the armed forces to assure transportation of these animals into the far north whenever they come down into areas that are inhabited?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I can assure hon. members that there is no danger for the polar bear in Canada. I am informed there are approximately 10,000 polar bears in the north and they are closely supervised by the Wildlife Service of Canada. The Wildlife Service permits the Eskimo people to kill a quota of about 400 polar bears per winter. Everything is under control. I am satisfied at this moment that there is absolutely no danger of extinction for that great animal.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, that is not the view of those who understand the problem thoroughly. Although, I do not belong to that group and I never, in all the hunting I have done, killed any Canadian animal.

Mr. Trudeau: Just fish.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: Except Grits.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: They do not require protection, but we would under the game laws if they had the power to deny it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I ask the minister to look further into this matter and put an end to trophy hunting of the white bear in the north, even though he is most optimistic that