

Oral Questions

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, if I were absolutely certain that such a meeting would be simply face to face, I would comply.

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[Translation]

ENERGY

GASOLINE AND FUEL OIL—SUGGESTION THAT MINISTER ASK PROVINCES TO REDUCE TAXES

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

As the sales tax on gas is 25 cents a gallon in Newfoundland and New Brunswick and 7 per cent on heating oil in British Columbia, has the minister pointed out to his provincial colleagues that a reduction in the sales tax would be greatly appreciated by consumers?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, such a suggestion was made at the last federal-provincial conference of energy ministers in Toronto and my provincial counterparts replied in the negative.

[English]

PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY NATURAL GAS PIPELINE—REPORTED WITHDRAWAL OF POSSIBLE PRIVATE FINANCING—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of persistent reports that the private sector is withdrawing its original interest in financing a Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline, has the government an alternative plan for getting this vitally needed outlet for natural gas built if private financing is not forthcoming?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, may I thank the hon. gentleman for giving me notice of the question. I have had an opportunity at a very recent date to discuss their proposals with the Canadian Arctic gas study group. They have indicated their intention in the relatively near future, within a matter of several months, to make application to the appropriate regulatory authorities both in Canada and in the United States for a pipeline. The gentlemen were kind enough to indicate that the emergence of the El Paso alternative proposal in Alaska was a matter of concern to them, and also that they were concerned about the situation in Canada vis-à-vis native rights in the Mackenzie valley. Subject to these concerns, I believe they will be going ahead at an early date to seek regulatory approval.

PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY NATURAL GAS PIPELINE—INQUIRY AS TO ESTABLISHMENT OF NON-DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR PENDING SETTLEMENT OF NATIVES' CLAIMS

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Has he written a letter, or has

[Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond).]

anyone in his department written a letter, to the Northwest Territories Indian Brotherhood or the Fort Wrigley people informing them that the government is establishing a corridor eight miles wide, four on either side of the Mackenzie River, within which no development will take place until such time as native claims in the Northwest Territories have been negotiated to a settlement?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, I do not know precisely which letter the hon. member is referring to since I and my officers have written often to the Indians of the Territories, but I shall investigate and report to the House. Of course, all required measures will be taken to protect the interests of the Indians, for certain indications have perhaps been so interpreted by the hon. member.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

METHOD OF RETURNING VESSEL, "GREENPEACE III", FROM TAHITI—ACTION TO OBTAIN COMPENSATION FROM FRANCE

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and has to do with the *Greenpeace III* vessel. Since the government of France has released the *Greenpeace III* in Tahiti some 7,000 miles from Vancouver, I should like to inquire whether the government of Canada is insisting that the ship be delivered, or is the government planning alternatively to assist David McTaggart financially in its return?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the government is considering the alternative, which is to help Mr. McTaggart bring the vessel back to Canada.

Mr. Rose: I wonder whether the minister would be a little more explicit. Since McTaggart is under medical orders to stay within 12 hours of a hospital because of an eye injury suffered during the French boarding of this vessel on the high seas, is Canada demanding reparations or compensation from France and, if so, what is France's attitude to these demands?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the first question related to bringing the ship back to Canada and the answer I gave was that we were considering assisting Mr. McTaggart financially to bring his ship back. The second question related to the damage that he claimed he suffered at the hands of the French navy. We have been pressing this case with the French government, so far without success.