

before the commission were far from unanimous, as he stated himself, and that the board is now preparing its report, which I am certain they will want to release as soon as it is completed. In the meantime the House is dealing with other matters, such as the constitutional debate. I must advise the hon. Leader of the Opposition that when legislation is ready to be considered by the House, this legislation will be introduced without delay.

[English]

#### ROLE OF NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** Madam Speaker, the report from the National Energy Board is not expected to be released until May at the earliest. In view of the fact that there is nearly a unanimous opinion on the part of the people who are appearing before that board with respect to the negative effects of the National Energy Program, would the minister advise the House what the role of the National Energy Board is in hearing these changed submissions as a result of the National Energy Program if it is not to have some impact on the National Energy Program? Is the minister going to allow all this good work to go to waste and force the House to hurry the passage of this legislation before getting the true facts on the table as a result of these hearings?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, most of the presentations—I would say, as a matter of fact, all the submissions—which have been put to the National Energy Board are already outdated because changes have been made to the National Energy Program, whether they be changes dealing with exploration expenses or with eligibility with respect to incentive grants. These changes are quite significant in terms of their impact on the industry, and in that sense all the representations which have been made are, as I said, out of date.

The National Energy Board will have to reach its own conclusions on the basis of the evidence it will receive and also on the basis of its own research and its own work. When this report is ready, obviously it will be made public, and everyone will be able to reach his own conclusions at that time.

As far as the National Energy Program as such is concerned, as I said there are some negotiations which still must be carried out with the provinces, and I certainly do not intend to delay those negotiations until we have received a report from the National Energy Board, any more than I intend to delay consideration by Parliament of any piece of legislation which would appear necessary.

● (1425)

#### CABINET CONSIDERATION OF PRICE CHANGES

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** The minister has just said he is going to ignore totally the most important energy advisory body in this country by rushing this legislation through and ignoring the very good work which has been done here. I do not know how the minister can say with a straight face that changes have been made which make those hearings past history. There has been no change in price; there has been

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no change in the production tax; there has been no change in the excise tax on natural gas. Those are the three primary reasons which are causing the changes in the exploration and supply outlook in this country.

My next question relates to the matter of price. Mr. Blair, of Nova corporation, one of the most balanced observers of the National Energy Program, said last week that he was recommending to the government a \$10 a barrel increase in 1981 and 1982. This is being currently discussed, I understand, by cabinet. Would the minister state whether the cabinet is considering price changes of that magnitude?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, my friend should certainly not be surprised that the industry should always be asking for more money. There is nothing new in this. It has been doing this for as long as one can remember.

So far as discussions in cabinet are concerned, it is not appropriate to reveal cabinet discussions, but in that instance I certainly can tell him that there has never been consideration of any such figure in cabinet.

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#### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

##### EL SALVADOR—GOVERNMENT POSITION RESPECTING U.S. ARMS SHIPMENTS

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Last fall at the United Nations the Government of Canada voted for a resolution on human rights which called for the termination of all military assistance to the junta in El Salvador. I should like to ask the minister to explain the contradiction between this principled position which the government took last fall and the statement he made last week when he said as minister for the Government of Canada:

I would certainly not condemn any decision the U.S. takes to send offensive arms . . . the U.S. can count on our quiet acquiescence.

I ask this question also in light of the fact that the former U.S. ambassador to El Salvador is quoted in yesterday's *New York Times* as saying:

The chief killer of Salvadorans is the government security forces.

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** I did not make any such statement last week, and in fact our policy is, as we stated at the United Nations last fall, a policy in which we do not approve of shipments of offensive arms, either from Canada or from other countries, to the states which are torn by internal strife. This has been our policy and continues to be our policy. I might add that, as the hon. gentleman knows, we have also made a continuing series of protests to the government of El Salvador with respect to human rights violations in that country.