

Adjournment Debate

intend to provide poachers with a good answer to that question: the prospect of facing a fine of \$150,000 and six months behind bars.

As the Hon. Member mentioned, the poaching problem does not stop there. He spoke of the retail prices of red meat, fish and poultry. These prices have made the poaching of meat increasingly attractive. This is particularly true of moose, deer and salmon. The black market value of a moose carcass ranges from \$400 to \$1,000. Again, a very small fine has been imposed for this kind of poaching. However, we intend to introduce a maximum fine of \$2,000 for other offences under the National Parks Act, offences which include the poaching of meat.

Creating a deterrent is only part of the solution to the problem. There are currently 250 wardens in the system. That may sound like a lot of wardens but they have to enforce 140,000 square kilometres of parkland and they must cope with the highly organized poaching activities, the more sophisticated poaching techniques and the increased use of violence by individuals that are apprehended. Clearly, we cannot rely on the patrols and surveillance operations of the wardens to keep pace with poaching. We must have better equipment, better training and inter-agency co-operation between wardens and the police. As well, I think we as individuals who use the parks have a responsibility to report any undue activities we see occurring in the parks in order to help those who are trying to protect nature at its finest.

ENERGY—REFINING CAPACITY IN QUEBEC—GOVERNMENT POSITION. (B) REQUEST FOR COMBINES INVESTIGATION

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, last week during Question Period, I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) how he plans to protect the Montreal jobs and the oil consumption prices of Quebec consumers from the consequences of the shutdown of the Gulf refinery which was permitted by the Government, throwing hundreds of people out of work and creating a daily deficit of 50,000 barrels a day of refined products in Quebec. He gave no serious answer to the question. I asked again specifically whether he would take action under the Canadian Combines Investigation Act. His response was quite evasive. That is just not good enough.

● (1820)

To review the main facts briefly, Ultramar bought the Gulf refinery and closed it. It is the fourth refinery in recent years to be closed in the east end of Montreal. The policy of this Government continued the policy of the previous Government in allowing the refining capacity of Quebec to be reduced so that now there are only three refineries left. There are a total of 1,700 men and women out of work and Quebec lacks 50,000 barrels a day in its capacity to refine petroleum products. It is very clear that with the Government's knowledge and foresight Ultramar bought the Gulf refinery for the purpose of closing it and keeping it closed. It refused to resell it to Gaz Metropolitan which would sell refined petroleum products in Quebec.

While Investment Canada was studying the sale, Ultramar publicly threatened the Government of Canada that if the federal Government took action to keep the refinery open Ultramar would close its Quebec City refinery. Shell made the same threat regarding the closing of its own Montreal refinery. In other words, they blackmailed the Government into shutting down and helping them to keep the Gulf refinery closed for the use of the Quebec people. The Government bowed to their threats.

Now the three refineries which have been operating at three-quarters capacity will be able to operate at maximum capacity. Of course, they will have a great increase in profits. They will be able to squeeze the small retailers, the independent retailers, out of business. According to what we learned from the O'Farrell Report, as it has been leaked under the Combines Investigation Act, this will mean price gouging against the people of Quebec. There will be a monopolization of prices, or a cartelization of prices, that forces them up. However, the mysterious thing is that the O'Farrell Report does not make clear whether it is investigating the particular practices of Shell and Ultramar.

Today, the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) asked the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Côté) whether the O'Farrell investigation which is continuing will go into the practices of Shell and Ultramar. The Minister refused to give an answer. He would not say yes or no as a fact. Instead, he dodged, making the excuse that he cannot interfere with the work of the investigator. He was not asked to interfere; he was asked simply for a statement of fact which he studiously avoided giving.

Is he afraid to tell the truth? Is it intended by this Government that the O'Farrell investigation, under the Combines Investigation Act, will go in there with its eyes closed so that it will not see any facts embarrassing to this Government? Mr. Speaker, we need a much more thorough investigation than it seems this Government yet wants.

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks there have been numerous questions raised about the closure of the Gulf refinery in Montreal east and the emergence of somewhat conflicting data, from a number of sources, relating to the impact this closure would have on refining capacity in Quebec.

The closure of the Montreal refinery brings to 13 the number of Canadian refineries closed since 1976—four of them in Montreal—as a direct result of the dramatically reduced demand for oil products in the country; I might say not only in this country but around the world. I met with 21 Energy Ministers last summer and they all talked about the rationalization of energy in their particular areas. Quebec has done a magnificent job of reducing its dependency on oil. It has reduced its oil share for energy use within the province from some 63 per cent down to 45 per cent in six years. The Quebec Government's goal is 40 per cent by 1990 and it will probably reach that goal. There is a dramatically reduced demand.