

● (1430)

SUGGESTED INQUIRY INTO METHODS OF DISPOSING OF
RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, when the minister is making that report, would he advise the House how long he and his ministry or the Atomic Energy Control Board or any other agency has been aware of the situation in Ottawa and what remedial action was taken prior to these reports? Would the minister undertake to launch a public inquiry into the way in which radioactive material is handled by industry and monitored by the Atomic Energy Control Board so that the safety of all Canadians, not just those in the Ottawa area, can be assured? I advise the minister that there are other areas in Canada where some of these sites might be located.

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I already indicated in answer to questions in the past week or so that I have yet to be presented with evidence which would suggest the need for an over-all inquiry. I do not rule an inquiry out, but I have not yet been presented with that evidence. As to the question of the clean up, plans have already been made for remedial action, the removal of the wastes at the sites in the Ottawa area, and that should be completed by early spring.

NATURAL GAS—GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT
SHORTAGE IN EARLY 1980'S

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The National Energy Board last year forecast imminent domestic gas shortages, the solution to which appears to be the construction of the Canadian Arctic gas pipeline, which requires Prudhoe Bay reserves. In view of Governor Hammond's statement before the federal power commission in Washington yesterday regarding Alaska's endorsement of the El Paso proposal, has the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources alternative means of preventing a gas shortfall in the early 1980's?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member will understand, the National Energy Board is completely seized with this question at the present time. It is presently conducting hearings. At the moment they are recessed for reasons of which I am sure the hon. member is aware, but they will be restarted very shortly to consider two applications in Canada.

As the hon. member is probably also aware, the regulatory proceedings in the United States are going forward, and there are two applications there. One is the El Paso route, and the other the Gas Arctic. There are bills in the United States house, and a recent one was introduced by Senator Mondale with respect to the Gas Arctic, so I think the regulatory process is continuing in both countries.

NATURAL GAS—GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO
SUPPLYING DOMESTIC MARKET

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): In view of that response, I ask if there are any studies under way at the

Oral Questions

present time to determine alternate gas supplies if the United States opts for the El Paso route, or is it the intention of this government to provide the Mackenzie Valley pipeline access on the basis of only about a 12 per cent provision for the Canadian market?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): I have already indicated to the hon. member that the National Energy Board is seized with this question. It is considering the questions of needs, time frame and the competing claims by two applicants.

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URBAN AFFAIRS

COST OF LAND—GOVERNMENT ACTION TO PREVENT
INCREASE

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for either the Minister of Finance or the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. They can decide between themselves who will answer.

In light of the constantly escalating cost of housing in this country, placing even modest accommodation outside the reach of most Canadians, and in view of the fact that the cost of land is a very substantial element—a recent survey indicates that the cost of land has escalated at an enormous rate—does the government intend to place any restrictions on the increase in the cost of land?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member asking about restrictions within the context of the anti-inflation program?

Mr. Baldwin: In any context.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): In the context of the anti-inflation program, this question has been discussed with the representatives of the provincial governments. The question has been postponed until some of the other more immediate questions facing both the Anti-Inflation Board and the provincial governments could be dealt with, but very definitely the price of land has been an important factor in the increase in the cost of housing in Canada in recent years, and it is a matter of concern both to the provincial and federal governments.

EFFECT OF INCREASED COST OF LAND ON HOUSE
CONSTRUCTION

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, in view of the rather bland answer of the Minister of Finance, I will turn to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs and ask him if it is the view of the government that any restrictions on the increase in the cost of land might be counterproductive to the making available of adequate land for the construction of houses.

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in response to a rather bland question, I should like to say that I am sure the hon. member appreciates the jurisdictional differences here. This has been a matter of discussion with provincial housing ministers, and it is a matter of great concern to the federal