

● (1430)

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to send the information to the minister about the dealers who have been cut off completely and also the allegation that a shipment intended for Canada has been sold on the spot market, specifically to Algeria, which country has been mentioned as the destination of the ship that was originally scheduled for Canada.

The final question I would like to ask, in the absence of the Prime Minister, is that in the House on Monday the Prime Minister assured me that he would check with the National Energy Board to see if the NEB was still considering export permits for home heating fuel. I wish to ask the minister if that checking has been done. More specifically, has the government taken steps to ensure that no more home heating fuel will be exported from Canada this winter?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, through my office, has in fact checked with the NEB. He will be providing the hon. member with a full and detailed explanation of the circumstances. I can assure the hon. member that recent applications with respect to the export of home heating fuel have not been accepted. There have been three over the course of the last month or so. I understand that three exports did take place during the course of last summer, with respect to summer heating fuel as opposed to winter heating fuel. A full and detailed explanation will be given to the hon. member by way of a letter, so that he can assess the information.

* * *

THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

SUPREME COURT DECISION ON QUEBEC BILL 101—LEGALITY OF LEGISLATION

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations. Now that the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled certain sections of Quebec bill 101 ultra vires and unconstitutional, what does the government intend to do to settle the legality of the other sections?

Will the minister make a commitment to this House to continue assisting the actions of individual litigants right up to the Supreme Court, in the same way as the previous government assisted Mr. Forest? I have in mind, in particular, the actions that are now before the Supreme Court by the Quebec Home and School Association, the Protestant School Board of greater Montreal, and the Devine case. Will he make a commitment to this House to continue supporting financially those actions right up to the Supreme Court of Canada?

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Mr. Speaker, I thought that commitment had already been given by the Secretary of State in response to a question some weeks ago. Certainly that continues to be the policy of the government.

Oral Questions

TRANSLATION OF ALL MANITOBA STATUTES

Hon. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations. In view of the historic decision as it affects the province of Manitoba, will the minister get in touch with the premier of that province, Mr. Sterling Lyon, to offer him what translation facilities and technical expertise can be spared by the federal government in order than he can begin the historic job of translating all Manitoba statutes passed since 1890, some 89 years of statutes passed only in English, so that they can quickly and speedily be translated into French in conformity with the decision of the Supreme Court?

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Mr. Speaker, I am not convinced that that is the implication of the decision. The hon. member may be right. I ask him, please do not misunderstand, but on the basis of my preliminary briefing I am not sure that the decision extends that far. It may be significantly more narrow and may relate to the legal process rather than to all statutes. As the hon. member will know, on the exact point that he raises there is litigation pending: if I am not mistaken, it is the asbestos nationalization case.

I apologize, but as the hon. member knows, the decision is only a very few hours old. I am not sure that is the implication. Once I have received the advice of the government's legal advisers, I will be in a much better position to respond directly to the hon. member's question.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NEW FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

Hon. Judd Buchanan (London West): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Defence. There is growing concern that we are not being given full and complete information on the proposed F-18A fighter aircraft. Has the minister seen the report of the past week which was prepared by the General Accounting Office in the United States government and which states that the F-18A program is in difficult straits due to major cost overruns, deficient performance, severely delayed delivery dates and, of extreme importance, deliberate concealment of information needed to redress these difficulties?

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that the critic for the Liberal party is now on the distribution list, courtesy of the NDP, of leaked documents from the GAO.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McKinnon: I was made aware of the existence of this draft document last week and realized that the General Accounting Office in the United States plays a very important and real role in their selection of all military equipment in a