

Is it correct that the government has agreed to add an amount of \$5 million for local initiatives projects submitted by municipalities of the province of Quebec?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I am not aware of that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Matte: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

In view of the statement of the Municipal Affairs Minister of Quebec and since the federal minister said at the time that projects submitted as late as February 7 had been accepted, could the right hon. Prime Minister enlighten the House on that matter?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is repeating the same question and I do not think this is in order.

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a supplementary question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

Is he for the continuation of the local initiatives program until the next federal election?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

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[English]

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

INQUIRY AS TO INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS TO ESTABLISH COMMITTEE AND CHANGE STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I had hoped the President of the Privy Council would remain with us, but in his absence I will direct my question to the Prime Minister. Two days ago I asked the President of the Privy Council a question concerning the government's intention to bring forward appropriate resolutions to set up the committee under the Statutory Instruments Act and to amend the House regulations in order to implement the bill passed by parliament and he indicated he would look into it. Has this matter been discussed by the government, and what is the intention of the government with regard to this very deliberate action on the part of the government, both in bringing in the legislation and then leaving it inoperative?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): With great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, I will take note of the question on behalf of the President of the Privy Council.

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ENERGY

NATURAL GAS—REFUSAL BY NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD TO GRANT EXPORT APPLICATIONS—REQUEST FOR REVIEW—STEPS TO ASCERTAIN ACTUAL RESERVES

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It arises out of the decision made in December, I believe, by the National Energy Board in

Inquiries of the Ministry

which it refused applications to export natural gas to the United States. I would refer the minister to Volume 35 of the Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates where he will find that Dr. Howland, a witness before the committee, said, first, that they took no account of any reserves in the Arctic and, second, that they took no account of any reserves in the future even though proven reserves have tripled in the ten years since the Borden commission was set up. In light of the fact that Imperial Oil say they now have reserves—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that this is a statement more than a question. He should ask the question as briefly as possible.

Mr. Woolliams: Yes. I am just coming to it. This is a difficult question. In light of the fact that Imperial Oil say they now have reserves of 20 trillion cubic feet in the north which were not taken into account, would the minister, in light of that new evidence and in light of what Dr. Howland said, be prepared to recommend a review by the National Energy Board, particularly before he makes his speech to the Petroleum Association next Tuesday in Calgary?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for giving me notice of the question. As I recall the decision of the board last fall, the reserves in the north were referred to by the board as being unquantified and inaccessible. It seems to me there has not been a change in that regard. If the hon. gentleman by any chance is referring to the article in the *Globe and Mail* yesterday he will have noted that the 20 trillion cubic feet was stated as the target of Imperial Oil but the president of that company did not say they had reached the target yet.

Mr. Woolliams: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I did give the minister notice of the question because it is a difficult one. In light of the fact that the government has no way of measuring these reserves, is the government now prepared to approach Imperial Oil and other companies that have some knowledge of these reserves, particularly in view of the relation of the government and Imperial Oil at Lake Louise, and obtain this information so that western Canada at least will get a fair shake in reference to the export of this commodity?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the reason the reserves are unquantified is that the field is still in the process of being drilled. Quite naturally, with more drilling experience we may be able to make a better estimate of it. That, of course, still does not get around the problem of bringing the gas to the market over the approximately 2,000 miles from the source.

• (1130)

Mr. Woolliams: Is there any body or any group working for the government to ascertain these reserves in the north, and have they any information from these corporations in reference to their reserves, or are you just shooting darts in the dark?