

Oral Questions

REQUEST THAT MINISTER MAKE INQUIRIES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg-Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I am assured by the *Vancouver Sun* reporter who had the statement—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I know the Government side has no belief in the veracity of the press, but this reporter said that Mr. Reisman's office issued a statement in which Mr. Reisman reiterated his point of view—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! I appreciate the Hon. Member's concern. What is his question?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister determine, from independent sources and not from Mr. Reisman himself, whether Mr. Reisman did in fact make that statement? Will he examine the question of whether continued statements of this kind seriously impair the credibility of Mr. Reisman as a negotiator?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will ask Tom Axworthy.

Mr. Axworthy: There's a stupid answer.

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PETRO-CANADA

PRICE OF GASOLINE—ROLE OF CORPORATION

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance, who today has obviously succeeded in hiding the Minister of Energy, which is no mean feat.

Some Hon. Members: Shame! Shame!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Some Hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Blaikie: It's no worse than what the Prime Minister said about Malépart.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway just ask a question, please.

Mr. Waddell: Is the Minister of Finance aware that Petro-Canada has in fact recently tried to stop stations from undercutting prices? Is the Minister aware that as recently as December the Director of Combines pointed out that Petro-Canada has not been acting on behalf of consumers, but has

been acting passively like the other oil companies? Why will he not accept these kinds of reports and direct Petro-Canada—

● (1430)

Mr. Speaker: Order. This is the third question.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, not being the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, I am not aware of that particular report. If he would like to send it to me I will look at it.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker—

An Hon. Member: Stand up.

Mr. Waddell:—given that the real issue is to force the oil companies to follow declining world oil prices, as I think the Minister would agree, is he prepared to accept the principle that Petro-Canada must be instructed to do this on behalf of the consumers of Canada who are saying "Enough is enough"? Is he prepared to instruct Petro-Canada to take that lead and in fact make the major oil companies start to reduce prices?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I think Petro-Canada has been aggressively trying to expand its market-place in the last little while. I believe it is in its own interest to do what the Hon. Member is asking for. We do not have to instruct Petro-Canada. It has been doing that itself, as I indicated to his Leader in answer to the same question that his Leader put to me twice.

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FISHERIES

ISSUANCE OF CLAM FISHERY LICENCE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Will the Minister explain why a four-month test licence for a clam fishery was issued to Mother Snow's Fine Foods Ltd. when the vessels it needs may only be available for a two or three week period in April, and may not even be available at all? Why was this licence issued when Mother Snow's may not even have the vessels with which to conduct the test fishery?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is speaking hypothetically. In fact there is a tremendous economic opportunity and employment potential in developing clam resources off the coast of Nova Scotia and several licences are to be approved to that end.