

and because uranium more and more will become one of the chief sources of power, and because of the high rate of uranium induced lung cancer now being sustained by people who work in the uranium mines, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro):

That the Minister of Labour use the powers presently vested in him to eliminate the incidence of uranium lung cancer now affecting over 130 people working in the Elliot Lake area.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimity.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENERGY

ATHABASCA TAR SANDS—GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPECTING DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister and ask him, in a specific instance, which minister is expressing government policy, the Minister of Supply and Services who continues to advocate at least consideration of a very rapid large-scale development of the Athabasca tar sands, or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who has described this massive scheme of the Minister of Supply and Services as "not feasible for practical or political reasons"? Would the Prime Minister tell us which minister is expressing government policy?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I attempted to answer this question yesterday. I can only repeat the same lines of my answer of yesterday or the day before. This tar sands project as advocated by the Minister of Supply and Services is not part of the government's energy policy. Government energy policy has been enunciated by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and by myself at various occasions. This other idea, as I told the House a couple of days ago, is one in which the minister has shown a great deal of personal interest. It is one in which I find an advantage in having him explore it further and discuss it with other people.

● (1440)

Mr. Stanfield: In view of the statements by the Prime Minister and, indeed, by the Minister of Supply and Services that the cabinet has not yet agreed to a policy on the tar sands—that is what the Minister of Supply and Services says and the Prime Minister seems to confirm it—and in view of the fact the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources says, "Well, that is not correct", indicating that the government has adopted a policy on the tar sands and indicating that it is quite inconsistent with what is being said by the Minister of Supply and Services, are we to

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understand from the Prime Minister that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is not correct when he suggests outside the House that the government has adopted already a policy with regard to the rate and scope of development of the tar sands?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the interest shown by the Leader of the Opposition in the government's position on this matter.

An hon. Member: Don't blow so early in the day!

Mr. Trudeau: I want to reassure hon. members opposite that things are going all right in the cabinet. It is my judgment that the Minister of Supply and Services can continue to make these speeches and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources can state government policy. I understand the concern of the opposition, but it would be more helpful to me as leader of the government if they were, for instance, to give guidance on their position with regard to a fair price for oil to be given to Alberta. This is the problem we will be discussing tomorrow between first ministers. It would be nice if the opposition, rather than drawing a red herring across the path, were able to state their policy on oil before we meet the provinces tomorrow.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, talking about red herrings, I must say the hon. gentleman opposite is certainly a master of that art.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: May I put it to the Prime Minister very bluntly, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources expressing government policy when he says that the plans being advocated by the Minister of Supply and Services are contrary to government policy? May I ask the Prime Minister how many government policies there are at the same time? Does the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources speak for the government in terms of energy policy, including the tar sands, and are we entitled to accept his statement as to what constitutes the policy of the government in that area?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition read the words which are the answer to his own question. He read words from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: —the Minister of Supply and Services—

An hon. Member: Which one?

Mr. Trudeau: —indicating that there had been no policy decision by the government on the type of program of which he is the proponent—