

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, those devices are available to all citizens and if the person concerned is able to establish to whom the device belongs, whether it is an individual or an organization, it is up to him to do it.

Mr. La Salle: I would like to ask a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Could the minister assure that the RCMP did not instal any device in that house?

Mr. Goyer: Mr. Speaker, I have also replied to this question by stating merely that it is never in the public interest—and the hon. member should be aware of the practice in this House—to answer affirmatively or negatively to this type of question.

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[English]

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

PURCHASE OF CONTROLLING INTEREST IN HOME OIL BY CONSUMERS GAS—TAX TREATMENT

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. My question relates to the announcement he made in the House yesterday afternoon concerning the purchase by Consumers Gas of Toronto of a controlling interest in Cygnus Corporation, and hence a controlling interest in Home Oil. In view of the participation of the government in the discussions that led up to this purchase, can the minister say whether the parties were given any assurances by the government concerning tax treatment?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the parties concerned were given no assurance of any kind, nor did they ask for any assurance of any kind or discuss tax concessions with the government in respect of their transaction.

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OIL

PROPOSED PUGET SOUND-CHICAGO PIPELINE—OIL SHIPMENTS FROM ALASKA—POSSIBLE POLLUTION PROBLEMS—EFFECT ON CANADIAN MARKET

Mr. Louis-Roland Comeau (South Western Nova): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Can he inform the House if the government of Canada is aware that oil companies are considering the construction of a major pipeline from the Seattle-Puget Sound area to Chicago, and has the government knowledge of the volume of oil that will be shipped from Alaska to the Seattle-Puget Sound area?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): In regards to the volume, Mr. Speaker, that depends on the quantum of the find at Prudhoe Bay. To date the companies have kept this information confidential, so we do not know what total volume will be found.

Inquiries of the Ministry

We have only estimates that have been made. With regard to a pipeline from Puget Sound to Chicago, I have no knowledge of any specific plan by any company to build such a line.

Mr. Comeau: Has the government carried out any studies on the probability of pollution problems in the Puget Sound area in relation to the various amounts of oil which might be moved to Seattle from Alaska?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there have been any specific studies as to the pollution hazards in the Puget Sound area which I could bring to the attention of the House. As the hon. member knows, general questions of pollution by reason of tanker movement from Alaska are very much in the mind of the government, and I believe discussions at a very high level will take place in Washington shortly as announced by the Prime Minister to the House.

Mr. Comeau: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the government carried out any studies on the possible effect on the Canadian oil market of such a pipeline?

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, the National Energy Board has under constant review the possible economic effects on Canada of various modes of oil transportation. I think I have indicated to the House previously that from the standpoint of the cost of moving northern oil from Prudhoe Bay or northern parts of Canada, if found, to the Chicago area, some 30 cents per barrel could be saved by Canadian movement rather than by Alaskan tanker movement.

APPLICATIONS TO ENERGY BOARD TO CONSTRUCT CONNECTING LINES BETWEEN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND STATE OF WASHINGTON

Mr. Thomas S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I should like to ask the minister whether there are any applications before the National Energy Board at this time for construction of any increased capacity for oil or gas pipelines in an intertie between British Columbia and the refinery at Cherry Point in the state of Washington close to the Canadian border?

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any specific applications to the National Energy Board. When the board sits in its capacity to hear applications, it sits in a quasi-judicial capacity, and thus is an independent entity, for that purpose. I shall be glad to make inquiries of the board on the specific question asked by the hon. member and let him know whether any such applications have been made.

PROPOSED TRANS-ALASKA PIPELINE SYSTEM—INQUIRY AS TO REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Is consideration being given by the government to preparing a