

to different types of products. Generally speaking, they are getting away from production of home heating fuels. Due to the policy of the provincial Government, we have also seen a drastic increase in the petrochemical industry in that province. Would the Hon. Member say that the energy conversion program had a considerable amount or a small amount to do with the requirement for heating oil and its incredible decline in Canada over the last several years? Does he think that they are both interrelated?

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's comments and his question. As I understand the question, it is whether the conversions of the end products of the Alberta refineries and the emphasis on petrochemical priorities have to do with the reduction in supply of home heating oil and whether that somehow relates to this over-all question.

I believe that the reduction in the production of home heating oil out of Alberta refineries relates more to the decline in demand in the markets readily available to those refineries. If the Hon. Member and I were to check, I believe we would discover that the production of home heating fuel declined rather more rapidly in Alberta than it did in other refineries, for example refineries in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. I believe there may indeed be some relationship of decline in demand in accessible markets.

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. The figures really do not lie as far as the output of oil refineries in Canada is concerned and the total consumption in each province of Canada and the products from the oil refineries. Does the Hon. Member see a steady decline in the production of refined oil in the Province of Alberta, as has been the case over the past several years, or does he agree with the recent report of the National Energy Board which stated that demand would reverse itself into a 1 per cent increase over the next several years? Does he think there is any end to the slide of demand for oil-related products out of the Province of Alberta and its refineries?

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the thrust of that question. I understand from discussions that I have had the privilege of engaging in with representatives of the industry, the federal Department and personnel of the Alberta Government that there is general agreement with the predictions of the National Energy Board that there will be a reversal and that their projections of a gradual increase will, in fact, be borne out.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member to give us his assessment of the effect on the country's oil import bill and also his assessment of the effect on equalization payments to those provinces using imported oil that will be caused by the withdrawal of the COSP and CHIP programs.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, that information is probably available. I do not have it readily at hand. My belief, as I said in my remarks, is that there will be an increased momentum in off-oil conversion and there will be an increase in home

insulation and commercial and industrial insulation because of the real and genuine economies that people are now well aware they can achieve by engaging in those conversions and in those retrofits.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Let me assure the Hon. Member that I did not expect him to provide numerical answers to the question about the oil import bill or the equalization payments bill. There is only one thing worse than those who merely spout statistics in this Chamber, that is, to alternate those who alternate between statistics and invective. Can the Hon. Member give me some examples of the effect which he predicts will take place, namely that by the withdrawal of a subsidy or economic stimulus activity will be enhanced? I would like to hear an example of a similar case in which that sort of thing happened.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I promise there will be no invective from this chair in the House. There may be some editorial comment, but no invective.

I rather expect that there will be some effect temporarily upon oil imports. There will be some effect temporarily on the question of equalization payments. However, I would not expect, and I concede this is guesswork, that there would be a lasting effect. Nor do I believe it would be very deep or severe.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would just like to clarify to the Hon. Member that I certainly did not have him in mind when I made the reference to those whose speeches are composed of equal parts of statistics and invective, but rather the Member who just caught the plane out of here or will be doing so in a couple of minutes. I have a final supplementary for the Hon. Member. What effect does he think the withdrawal of these subsidies will have on employment in this country?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): I'm sorry, but the period for questions and comments is now over.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 45, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson)—Canadian Security Intelligence Service (a) Size of budget (b) Service's accountability; the Hon. Member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Baker)—Energy (a) Federal Newfoundland agreement (b) Government position.