

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member wants an answer to that he will have to ask the City of Joliette. It is my understanding that it was they who contracted with the individual involved.

In terms of the qualifications, the Hon. Member may want to correspond directly with the City of Joliette.

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NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

PRICE PAID BY MANITOBA CONSUMERS FOR NATURAL GAS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Late last week the National Energy Board refused the application made by the Manitoba Government to force TransCanada PipeLines to carry natural grass-

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): He said natural.

Mr. Murphy: The decision by the National Energy Board means that Manitoba consumers will be paying much more than they should for natural gas. The concern of the people of Manitoba is that they are not getting the benefits of deregulation. What will the federal Government do to ensure that the consumers of Manitoba will be paying less for natural gas?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Hon. Member is quite aware that the National Energy Board is a quasi-judicial body that renders decisions from time to time with respect to energy. It has rendered a decision in this case.

There is a involved, and if any party wishes to appeal or wishes to register a differing point of view, a mechanism is in place for that to happen.

In light of the circumstances and the fact that contracts have to be observed—I think that was essentially the finding—I hope that the two jurisdictions, the Province of Alberta and the Province of Manitoba, can get together to resolve this matter in an amicable way.

NEGOTIATION OF PRICE BY LARGE CORPORATIONS

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, considering that natural gas deregulation was sold to the House of Commons and the people of Canada on the basis that it would benefit the small consumer, why is it possible for large consumers and large corporations to negotiate lower prices while it is not possible for the people of Manitoba to negotiate lower prices?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I can only assume that the Hon. Member is suggesting that contracts should be broken. A contract is a contract. I believe that is the principle the National Energy Board upheld.

The fact of the matter is that under the deregulation of natural gas prices there has been a general reduction in the price of natural gas. He should not lose sight of that.

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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

DIOXIN IN PAPER PRODUCTS—CHLORINE BLEACHING PROCESS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment my question is directed to whatever Minister may be answering for the Minister of the Environment. Dioxin, which has been found in paper products in the United States, I understand is formed through the chlorine bleaching process that is used by American and Canadian paper mills. Bearing in mind the danger of dioxin, will the Minister give his undertaking that the Government will require Canadian paper producers to switch from the dioxin producing chlorine bleaching process to the safer oxygen bleaching process that is used by European paper mills?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Department of National Health and Welfare is doing a detailed assessment of the health hazards related to dioxin. We will give those findings to the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. We are also working with Environment Canada.

I want to make one other point to the Hon. Member, concerning changing from the chlorine bleaching system to the oxygen system. There are certain studies that would indicate that it does not necessarily have the same efficacious health results as some people are putting forward. However, we are looking at the entire question.

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AGRICULTURE

LOSS OF MEAT INSPECTION STAMP AT KITCHENER PLANT

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. He knows that several weeks ago a meat inspection stamp was lost at the J. M. Schneider plant in Kitchener. This, along with the general transfer of inspection responsibilities from inspectors to the company itself, could represent a threat to Canada's enviable reputation for meat inspection. What action is the Government