

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

already knows, that the whole subject of oil import policy and oil policy in the United States is under study by a task force appointed by the President of the United States. Until that task force reports, the United States government does not have a view.

**Mr. Hees:** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did they indicate when this task force is liable to report so that we can get on with the job?

**Mr. Sharp:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. They expect it will be in the reasonably near future. They have welcomed any contribution we can make to the study.

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Did the Canadian ministers express a Canadian oil policy? Did the Canadian ministers put forward to the ministers in Washington Canadian objectives with regard to the export of oil and gas?

**Mr. Sharp:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. We supported the general policies that the deskmate of the present Leader of the Opposition espoused. We continue to follow a national oil policy designed to maximize the output of oil and to maximize our exports to the United States.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Did the Canadian ministers put forward a specific policy or did they simply talk in terms of maximizing exports and the sort of general objective the minister is talking about?

**Mr. Sharp:** I do not know anything more important than to maximize the exports of Canadian oil. I hope my hon. friend will agree with this. It is a desirable objective.

**Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North):** In view of the answers of the minister to the Leader of the Opposition, I wonder whether I may put a question? I refer to paragraph 10 of the communiqué which was filed this morning. The last sentence of the paragraph reads as follows:

In this connection, the United States members described the intensive review being undertaken of United States oil import policies.

It does not refer to any intensive research or study of Canada. I think it is time we had an answer to this question. Will the minister now confirm or deny whether there is a secret agreement between the United States and Canada which has been made by the government since the secret agreement of 1967?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, we have arrangements with the United States which are designed to result in the largest flow of oil across the Canada-United States border that is possible. The hon. member is perfectly aware of this. It is desirable to promote this objective with the maximum agreement from the United States. That is what we are doing.

**Mr. Woolliams:** May I put one supplementary question? Will the minister answer the question whether there is now a secret agreement between Canada and the United States which was completed since 1967? If the minister fails to answer, the answer must be in the affirmative.

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman knows, there is an open border between Canada and the United States with respect to oil. That is the objective of the Canadian government, to maintain an open border. If the hon. member wants to have that border closed, he can go on talking as he is talking now.

**Mr. Woolliams:** On a question of privilege, the minister knows I have never suggested that the border be closed when speaking for that industry in western Canada or any other industry. If the minister was not guilty of so much verbiage and always being so decisive in everything he says, he would be able to give me some of this information.

**Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo):** A supplementary question with regard to the discussions on oil policy. When these discussions took place, did the minister clearly indicate that Canada had other alternatives failing the admission of additional oil to the United States, such as a pipeline to Montreal?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, the United States government knows and we have discussed with them on many occasions that there are alternatives available. It is our view, however, and I hope the hon. gentleman agrees, that the alternative we should choose is the one that results in the maximum output of oil from western Canada.

**Mr. Saltsman:** Did the minister make very clear during these discussions that the Canadian government was prepared to go to these alternatives failing access to the United States market?

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, if by chance, and I hope this will not happen as a result of some of the irresponsible statements being