

Oral Questions

Melville Islands in the Arctic Ocean and whether they have suggested a route for the transport of that gas to eastern Quebec and the United States?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have already answered such a question in the House. Panarctic Oils Limited, Canadian Pacific and other companies are interested in such a pipeline in the Arctic. For the moment, a committee is carrying on a polar gas study concerning that pipeline plan to eastern Canada, especially Quebec.

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member resume his seat—

[*English*]

I bring to the attention of hon. members that there are five or more members seeking to ask supplementaries on this subject, which might very well take us almost to the end of the question period. I hope hon. members will limit their supplementaries on this subject because we have not been progressing very quickly as a result of the number of supplementaries on the subjects already brought to the fore by hon. members.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Would he use his influence in favour of the shortest route, across the eastern part of the Hudson Bay and James Bay?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I must give—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Chair has interpreted the question of the hon. member as a representation and recognizes the hon. member for Calgary North.

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[*English*]

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

INTENTION OF CHAIRMAN, DR. HOWLAND, TO RESIGN—
REQUEST THAT WESTERN INTERESTS BE CONSIDERED IN
MAKING NEW APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister a question. In light of the fact the National Energy Board has jurisdiction to make decisions regarding the export of natural gas and other energy commodities and products, has there been any suggestion that Dr. Howland, chairman of the National Energy Board, intends to resign, or is there any suggestion that there will be a change in the personnel of the National Energy Board, either due to political interference or to other reasons?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that Dr. Howland, whose term as chairman of the National Energy Board expires in August of this year, has indicated that he

[Mr. Laprise.]

would wish to resign as of early next month. Perhaps I might take this occasion, since we are speaking about the matter, to commend particularly the dedicated service that Dr. Howland has given this country over the last 25 years in many capacities, but especially as vice-chairman and chairman of the National Energy Board.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1450)

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): He has been a good public servant and has worked hard for Canada.

Mr. Woolliams: In light of the fact that much of the work of the National Energy Board has been concerned in the past and certainly will be in the future with exports of natural gas and crude petroleum, which are so important to the economy of Alberta and other western provinces, will the minister assure the House that when making decisions to appoint new personnel to the board western Canadian interests will be taken into consideration?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I might remind the hon. gentleman that there are at the present time several Albertans on the board. Of course, the function of the board is not only to deal with petroleum questions but also with questions in respect of electricity.

An hon. Member: What about the Atlantic provinces?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): And, as the hon. member suggests, with the emerging east coast industry—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

POSITION OF MINISTER RESPECTING OWNERSHIP OF
MARINE RESOURCES OF CONTINENTAL SHELF AND SLOPE

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has the minister been apprised of the statement yesterday afternoon by President Echeverria of Mexico that the Mexican government has decided to extend its ownership of its marine resources 200 miles seaward, and is the minister now prepared in the interest of Canada having a unified position in international affairs to state categorically that he does support the position that the marine resources over the continental shelf and slope are owned by Canada?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of this statement and I thank the hon. gentleman for bringing it to my attention. I do wish to say to him and to the House that it is the intention of the government to issue a statement later in the year on Canada's objectives and position in respect of the whole question of the law of the sea, including the question raised by the hon. gentleman.

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister whether Canada's official position to be taken at the Law of the Sea Conference will be to