

Oral Questions

at all. Would the Minister assure us that there will be at least enough funding for two women from each province to attend, and will she tell us what her Department can do to ensure that women can have a voice in this debate? Can she assure us that they will get the same kind of funding for legal advice and lobbying which the organizations putting forward the other view have received?

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to answer the question and express my disappointment with some of those women who did not see fit to bring their problem to my attention until last Friday night. I was in my riding at the time and was unable to respond to them because, of course, offices close at five o'clock. In the meantime I set in motion a request through the office of the Secretary of State, and I understand there is some \$50,000 available, and we are looking into that at the moment. I reiterate that I am very disappointed that they did not come forward to ask for this funding earlier. However, we will do our best to see that they get something to attend that conference.

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CROWN CORPORATIONS

PETRO-CANADA—CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Can he indicate to the House exactly what process is followed if an individual is found in conflict of interest while employed in a Crown corporation? I refer specifically to Petro-Canada. Would the Minister give consideration to the dismissal of individuals found in conflict of interest?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, there is a management board of Petro-Canada and they have to apply the normal business practice and government practice in situations of conflict of interest. Of course I do not know which problem the Hon. Member refers to, but if he tells it to me I will refer it to the chief executive officer to make sure the situation is corrected.

PURCHASE OF FURNITURE BY EXECUTIVES

Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, the chief executive officer is involved in the conflict of interest, along with the vice-president of human resources and corporate administration. I refer specifically to them using their position to purchase furniture from Petro-Canada at drastically reduced rates. I have copies of the sales agreement and the disposal forms. Will the Minister give consideration to referring this matter to the appropriate standing committee, or to the Auditor General, so that we can have a complete audit of the books? In the event a conflict of interest is found, as I can substantiate, will the Minister personally dismiss these individuals, as he is the one shareholder on behalf of all

Canadians and there is a considerable amount of taxpayers' money involved?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, there is a board of directors of this company and I will refer the problem to the board, if there is a problem. I have not been informed of any such problems so far. I will ask my Deputy Minister, who is a member of the board, to look into the matter.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCE BY-ELECTION DATES

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister who will know that, pursuant to the provisions of the House of Commons Act, he is obliged to call a by-election for the constituency of Nepean-Carleton no later than May 18 of this year, which is this week. Can the Prime Minister tell the House and the country whether it is his intention to set at the same time by-election dates for the other four vacancies in the House of Commons?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is correct in suggesting that, under the legislation, I will have to set a date for the by-election by May 18. I will take the Hon. Member into my confidence, and his Leader can listen, too, if he ever comes into the House. He was here a moment ago.

Mr. McKinnon: No more cheap shots. Let's get on with it.

Mr. Trudeau: Well, Mr. Speaker, I may be leaving, but I have certainly heard a lot of cheap shots from the other side regarding myself. I do not think the Hon. Member should be so thin-skinned when it comes to so-called cheap shots.

Mr. Jarvis: McKinnon thin-skinned? Wrong guy.

Mr. Trudeau: Well, whoever it was.

Mr. McKinnon: It was I.

Mr. Trudeau: The problem I am faced with, Mr. Speaker, is that the other by-elections do not have to be called during the term that my writ runs. I am debating within my own heart the ethics of setting the dates for the others when they can be perfectly legally set by my successor when he assumes the exalted office of Prime Minister and bears the mantle with his customary dignity.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I, of course, do not indulge in partisan politics at any time—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn:—but I just want to tell the Prime Minister that there is not much chance of that crowd wearing the mantle in that way.