

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

Mr. Lundrigan: Yes.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): No, it is not.

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

## INCREASE IN AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In January, on February 9 and on March 23 I drew the minister's attention to the fact that the insurance companies had announced increased rates for automobile insurance. These rates have now come into effect as of April 1 and the increases vary all the way from 10 per cent to 35 per cent, depending on category. Has the minister made any representations to the insurance companies asking them to defer the implementation of these increases? Has he received a favourable reply? Also, what action does he propose to take with respect to these very substantial increases in auto insurance rates?

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, my previous answer on this question stands. The matter is being studied by the various departments which have an interest in it and particularly by my department and the insurance branch of the Department of Finance.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. That is not the information I sought in my question. I asked the minister if he had made any representations to the automobile insurance companies since this matter was raised last January. What was the nature of their replies and what action has he proposed to take in the light of those replies?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could answer that question. First of all, we made representations with regard to the proposed increases in insurance rates. Not only did we do this but I had the Superintendent of Insurance examine the positions of individual companies to determine whether or not the increases were justified on a loss-ratio basis. I have that report; I believe it is in my office somewhere and I would be pleased to look it up and answer the hon. gentleman's question in more detail on a subsequent day. I believe, as I recall the report, that the Superintendent of Insurance examined some cases and the increases were justified on the basis of expenditures that were incurred.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I take it from the minister's statement that his department has examined the books of the insurance companies and that the government is now satisfied that these increases were warranted. If so, is the minister prepared to supply that data? Would he also tell the House whether or not the Prices and Incomes Commission was aware of that study?

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Speaker, as I recall, the Prices and Incomes Commission was not involved. It was done by the Superintendent of Insurance who examines the books of insurance companies on a continuous basis. I should like to look at the report before giving a definitive answer.

## INCREASE IN COST OF FISHING LICENCES BY MANITOBA GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the wide concern over the increases in rates and prices, can the minister say what action the federal government may intend to take against the government of the province of Manitoba which has just recently imposed a very drastic 33½ per cent increase in the cost of provincial fishing licences?

**An hon. Member:** Shame!

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, that surely is a matter within the purview of the legislature of Ontario—of Manitoba.

**An hon. Member:** The minister is really confused.

**Mr. Basford:** The Prices and Incomes Commission and the federal government have urged the provincial governments to limit their increases in user fees and other charges, and generally the commission has received co-operation from the government of the province of Manitoba.

[*Translation*]

## NATIONAL REVENUE

REPORTED CHANGE IN FORT ERIE  
EMPLOYEES WORK SCHEDULES CONTRARY  
TO AGREEMENT

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Minister of National Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, last week the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) asked me to inquire about changes in work schedules which might affect the Fort Erie crossing employees.