

Finance indicated that he was establishing a productivity centre to look at these very issues the Hon. Member is addressing which are being negotiated currently by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and by the Minister—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

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CANADA POST CORPORATION

CANVASSING OF ADVERTISEMENTS—THREAT TO WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Canada Post. Through its postmasters Canada Post is still selling advertising and producing flyers which are then distributed through the mails in direct competition with and threatening the very lifeblood of small weekly newspapers. Two weeks ago the Minister said that he would look into this deplorable situation. Has the Minister looked into it, and what are the results?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): After the question was put to me, Madam Speaker, I conveyed those remarks to the Canada Post Corporation Chairman who told me he would get in touch with the Hon. Member who raised the question so as to give him an explanation. I will make sure that the Hon. Member who is asking the same question gets an explanation from the Canada Post Corporation Chairman.

[English]

ROLE OF POSTMASTERS

Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca): Madam Speaker, as yet the director of Canada Post has not been in touch, so I will ask the Minister one more question. Does he not recognize that if Canada Post is given the mandate to solicit advertising, produce flyers and distribute them, he is putting every postmaster in the country in a conflict of interest position because they, in turn, have the distribution of the local weeklies? They can throw the local weeklies in a corner and hold them back from delivery so that their advertisements go out first. Does the Minister not recognize the very dangerous precedent which he is setting by using postmasters in direct competition with weekly newspapers?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I believe the Hon. Member has read the same article that I read outlining the possibility of a conflict of interest. Indeed I will review the situation and discuss it with the officials of the Canada Post Corporation to find out whether or not postmasters are in a conflict of interest position. On the surface I do not think they are, but I would like to look at it in more depth and report back to the House of Commons.

Oral Questions

METRIC CONVERSION

MEASUREMENT OF FLOOR COVERING—REQUEST THAT ORDER IN COUNCIL BE RESCINDED

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, my information is good news. It has been brought to my attention that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, to whom my question is directed, has announced that the Metric Commission has walked its last kilometre.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Domm: Given the fact that there is an Order in Council which indicates, "imperial units of measurement shall not be used in any advertising of floor coverings in Canada after January 1, 1981", would the Minister kindly put this Order in Council in place and rescind it, since carpet retailers across Canada, such as Eaton's, Sears, The Bay, retailers in the cities of Vancouver and Richmond, are all using imperial measurement in the advertising of their floor coverings?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, once again the Hon. Member is turning his dreams into reality. He has his own very peculiar way of presenting facts to the House, but they do not necessarily reflect reality. I might suggest to him that his double question or rather his two suggestions are quite besides the point and he ought to keep up with the facts.

[English]

Mr. Domm: I am sure the people across Canada have grown to respect and trust the word of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

SALE OF GASOLINE BY THE GALLON

Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. Would he advise the House and his colleagues why in December, 1982, he had a press conference at which time he announced that if the 37 Members of Parliament were to open a service station and sell by the gallon and the litre, he would prosecute? Why has the Minister not prosecuted?

● (1500)

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I know that the Hon. Member can hardly wait to be hauled into court. I would not want to disappoint him, but I am convinced that the officials of my own Department and the Department of Justice who are looking into this case will straighten him out in due time. Anxious as he is about this issue, perhaps I should point out to the Hon. Member that his insistence on reopening the issue