

Oral Questions

coast residents are opposed, apparently because our affairs of state are now being carried on using the InfoCan *Hansard* clipping service—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure that the hon. member appreciates that a question cannot be asked in those terms, and that it is not conducive to the orderly conduct of business to ask questions which are clearly out of order.

Mr. McKinnon: Mr. Speaker, I will try to get to the question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs who must take responsibility for this communications muddle. Can he explain to the House in a straightforward way what he intends to do to retrieve the situation, if it can be retrieved?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it perfectly clear that the position of the Canadian government has been known, to the Congress of the United States, the State Department, this country and this House, for many months and has not changed.

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COMBINES**ALLEGED COLLUSION OF AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE COMPANIES TO INCREASE RATES—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION**

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the recent announcement by the Canadian Underwriters' Association that the cost of automobile insurance will increase in the six provinces which do not have a provincial automobile insurance program by 5 per cent to 16 per cent effective August 1, 1973, would the minister tell the House whether he has instructed his officials to investigate this massive and concerted move on the part of private insurance companies for a possible violation of the Combines Investigation Act?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to draw this point to the attention of the officials of the combines branch to see whether any question has been raised or would be raised under the Combines Investigation Act.

REQUEST FOR STUDY OF PRIVATE AND PROVINCIAL AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE SCHEMES

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): A supplementary. Would the minister tell the House whether it is his intention to instruct his officials to study the automobile insurance rates in all provinces and to publish the results of such study so as to inform Canadian consumers everywhere about the relative merits of provincial car insurance programs as compared with private insurance schemes in the other provinces?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I will consult with my officials
[Mr. McKinnon.]

about that and see whether the suggestion comes under the terms of reference of the Combines Act.

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FINANCE**CANADIAN POSITION AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ON COMBATING INFLATION**

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance on the general subject of inflation and prices. In view of the magnanimous undertaking by his colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, yesterday, that the minister is going to play some lead in some international meeting respecting trade, commerce and inflation, I wonder if the minister would be good enough to inform the House today what new initiative he or the government is taking to provide leadership at the international level respecting rising prices and inflation?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will be directing the attention of other industrial nations of the world both in Washington when we meet at the Group of Twenty having to do with international monetary reform and as my colleague has suggested, within OECD as well, to pinpointing the central relations between inflation on a worldwide scale and the difficulty it is causing in the resolution of the international monetary problems.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In view of the fact that Canada's inflation rate is higher than most others, would the minister tell us whether he is seeking information or giving it at this meeting?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman's preamble is not factually correct.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**SUGGESTED VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER TO COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY**

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, a question for the Prime Minister. In view of the urgent need, as very accurately expressed in the latest report of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that the Prime Minister should, in the very near future visit the countries of the European Economic Community as have all the leaders of the other leading trading nations of the world, has the Prime Minister already prepared a plan for such a series of visits next fall or does he intend to formulate such plans in the very near future?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am giving most earnest consideration to this suggestion of the Senate Committee, and I do hope I will have the support of all sides of this House if and when I make that trip.

Mr. Hees: A supplementary question. I should like to ask the Prime Minister if the reason that he has steadfast-