

INTEREST RATE CHARGED BY BANKS ON LOANS TO
SMALL BUSINESSMEN, FARMERS AND FISHERMEN

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Finance. With chartered banks now charging many small businessmen, farmers and fishermen an effective interest rate in excess of 10 per cent per annum, more than two and a half points above the so-called low prime rate, would the minister tell the House if this is the way he envisaged his policy of dual lending would work? In short, did he intend one rate for larger corporations and a substantially higher rate for small businesses, farmers and fishermen?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the banks are in effect applying a dual rate system. If the hon. gentleman has evidence running counter to that I would be glad to see the facts of the particular case.

Mr. Stevens: In the absence of the Minister of Finance yesterday, the Prime Minister said that he was confident the banks were following the directives of the Minister of Finance with respect to maintaining a dual prime rate. Would the minister inform the House in what way he has monitored the actions of the chartered banks in respect of small business loans during this tight money period, or is he content to rely solely on the supervision of the Inspector General of Banks, who has one secretary and one clerk—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Minister of Finance.

● (1440)

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, as the figures on bank loans come forward, the amount of loans under \$100,000, \$500,000, \$1 million and so on, and the locations of those loans, we hope to have figures to substantiate that particular matter.

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[Translation]

BILINGUALISM

PROPOSED PAYMENT OF SUBSIDIES TO PROVINCES
SUGGESTED TO PROMOTE TEACHING OF OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to point out to you that we are now completing a first turn, what with supplementary questions and others put between our own questions and those of the Progressive Conservatives mostly.

I should like to put a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

As it is rather difficult to become bilingual, would the Prime Minister tell us whether, among other steps designed to encourage the teaching of the two languages in Canada, the government intends to pay subsidies to all the provinces with a view to facilitating the teaching of

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the two official languages in all Canadian elementary schools?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the House knows that the federal government pays enormous sums of money to all Canadian provinces to help with the teaching of one or the other official language as a second language. Those amounts are spent by the provinces but the federal government does exercise some control. In this regard, a report was made at the last federal-provincial conference, and the Secretary of State did say in fact that he had seen the report in question, and that we do intend to pay subsidies while exercising closer control over the way the provincial governments spend this money to make sure that, in fact, it goes to the teaching of languages and is not put to other uses.

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[English]

HEALTH

INCREASE IN TROPICAL DISEASES IN CANADA—STEPS TO
TRAIN PHYSICIANS

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the alarming increase in tropical diseases in Canada, the potential hazard of 200,000 visitors from tropical countries on the loose, and the scarcity of physicians in this field, leaving an almost hopeless task for the physicians trained in treatment, would the minister take steps to assure federal aid to provide training and physicians to cope with this very serious situation?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for having drawn this problem to my attention. We are in discussions with the tropical and parasitic disease centre in Toronto on a continuing basis and we are investigating with them ways of improving the situation. At the same time, the fact that there are so many visitors coming to Canada makes it rather difficult to keep a medical check on everybody. There is a practical administrative and technical problem that is also involved. This is more the result of the jet age than of tropical diseases themselves.

Mr. Rynard: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare if he will communicate with the Minister of Manpower and Immigration on this very important point?

Mr. Lalonde: I certainly will, Mr. Speaker, but the problem is not easy in itself.

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[Translation]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

INQUIRY RESPECTING CERTAIN CARS ABANDONED NEAR
VARENNES

Mr. Claude Wagner (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the hon. Minister of Transport.