

Oral Questions

Mr. McDermid: Tell that to people with 19 per cent mortgages.

Mr. Lalonde: In effect, the rate today at 11 per cent is the lowest it has been since November, 1978. Frankly I hope this downward trend will be maintained in the months to come because it is a very encouraging sign for home owners, businesses, and everyone in the economy.

ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. S. J. Korchinski (Mackenzie): Madam Speaker, in view of the fact the Minister cannot guarantee anybody that we will not be playing renewable roulette within the next ten months or so, would he reconsider his answer and, at the same time, at least go to private lenders and discuss with them whether they can come up with a plan if the Government cannot?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the suggestion of a plan which would provide some insurance is one that has been made by the Minister responsible for CMHC. As a matter of fact, he has worked on the subject with people in the private sector and examined the implications of such a proposal. We have been informed both from the private sector and experts in the field that there are a number of difficulties and that more studies are required. This is what the Minister has said outside the House quite frequently.

The private sector has been extensively involved, but I want to remind my hon. friend again that, if he is not satisfied with an 11 per cent prime rate, he can get today from one bank a 10.75 per cent mortgage for one year, and if he wants to have it a little longer he can go to a five-year rate at 13.25 per cent. Five-year mortgage rates are back on the market.

Again I hope, through the continuation of the monetary policy we have in Canada at the present time, and with the measures which will be contained in the budget, we will see a continuation of the decline in interest rates. Already our measures have been very successful in the last year in bringing down interest rates very significantly; as a matter of fact, cutting them from 19 per cent and 20 per cent down to 11 per cent and 10.75 per cent. It is pretty good in the space of nine months.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

REPORTED TRANSFER OF IMMIGRATION DETAINEES IN LEG-IRONS AND HANDCUFFS

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration may I direct my question to the Acting Minister and also to the Solicitor General, if part of it should apply to him. Would the Hon. Minister confirm whether on April 10 or 11 there was a transfer from Toronto to the Ottawa-Carleton

Detention Centre of 11 detainees under the Immigration Act, most of whom, if not all were of East Indian origin? What was the purpose of the move from Toronto to Ottawa? If there was to be a hearing in Ottawa, why was it not ascertained that such a hearing would not be held and then decided that the said detainees were to be returned to Toronto for a hearing on April 25? It this applies to the Solicitor General, but in any event to the Minister, would he explain to the House why those detainees were moved in leg-irons and handcuffs since they were only guilty of statutory law transgressions, if at all? If they were refugees coming up for hearings in Ottawa, why were they transferred in leg-irons and handcuffs?

Mr. Pinard: Order Paper.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We know how long it takes to answer questions on the Order Paper.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I have had no notice of this question. I have no knowledge of the alleged transfer of refugees, or alleged transfer of detainees. I will look into it immediately. If the Hon. Member has any more information about it, I would be glad to have it from him.

COST OF TRANSFER

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Madam Speaker, might I ask either of the Ministers also to supply the approximate cost of this exercise in futility?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I will look into that as well.

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CROWN CORPORATIONS

CANADAIR—FINANCIAL BENEFITS ACCRUING TO UNITED STATES

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, speaking of Order Paper questions, and since I cannot get any information there about Canadair, I would like to elicit, if I could, just one answer from either the Prime Minister, the Minister of Supply and Services, or the Acting Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, concerning the proportion of financial benefits from this massively funded Crown corporation that have gone to the United States. I am thinking of Bill Lear's company, also Federal Express, and so on. Can someone over there tell me just what percentage of the industrial, monetary or other benefits have gone to the United States—

Mr. Pinard: Order Paper.

Mr. MacKay:—rather than to Quebec and Canada, which was the whole purpose of setting up this company and subsidizing it so massively?