

Minister to fulfil his duties, for which he is being paid an extra \$30,000 annually, and report to the committee?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept the proposition. I do not know about it.

Mr. Crosbie: Why can you not accept it?

Mr. Pepin: I doubt very much whether the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources implied that he would refuse to go to committee. However, I will make absolutely sure of that as soon as I can.

EXAMINATION OF ESTIMATES

Mr. Paul Dick (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, after checking with the clerk of the committee, the executive assistant to the Minister, and with David Zussman in the Minister's office—and although I warned them yesterday that I would be asking a question of this nature today and asked them to get back to me because I did not want to make it difficult at this time of the Liberal leadership Campaign—I find nobody can confirm that the Minister will be around to come to the committee to defend his Department's estimates. We are concerned about Petro-Canada, the Beaufort Sea discussions, and all the various areas of the national energy policy. Could the Minister make an effort and report back on Tuesday as to whether a date has been found on which the Minister could come and be examined?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, again I cannot accept the postulate, but I will discuss it with my colleague and make sure that he is available next week.

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TRADE

SHOE IMPORT QUOTAS

Mr. Bill Kempling (Burlington): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade. There has been extensive media coverage on the shoe quotas which are due to expire on November 30. I understand the Minister met with industry representatives last Monday and confirmed to them that the shoe quotas would be extended for another 18 to 24 months beyond November 30. Based on this information, many people engaged in the shoe business are making commercial decisions anticipating and announcement which the Minister has promised for next Tuesday. Will the Minister confirm that he will be announcing next Tuesday an extension of shoe quotas for an additional 18 to 24 months, or is it his intention to abolish the shoe quotas?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I will make an announcement as soon as Cabinet finalizes its considerations with reference to the course that will be taken on the quantitative restrictions for shoes. That

Oral Questions

matter will be before Cabinet again on Tuesday morning. It is quite possible that the matter will be concluded at that time, but I cannot give the Hon. Member an absolute assurance. I am anxious to have a firm position at the earliest possible date so that shoe manufacturers, importers, retailers and others involved in the trade can make their plans accordingly.

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PARTICIPATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN MONTREAL SEMINAR ON QUEBEC'S PLACE IN WORLD

Mr. Claude-André Lachance (Rosemont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for External Relations. The Minister is aware that in Montreal, on May 29 and 30, the Government of Quebec will host a summit conference on Quebec in the World. Since this summit conference may be expected to focus as well on federal authority as it complements that of the Government of Quebec, could the Minister inform the House what the federal Government's intentions are about participating in this event and the conditions for that participation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that we have indeed been invited to participate in this event and also that we have agreed with the topics to be discussed, provided we can also agree on the conditions for federal participation. I think my hon. friend will agree with our proposal, which is that since the federal Government has most of the responsibility in this area, it cannot be treated as just another participant, like the co-operative movement, for instance.

Thus, we are trying to reach agreement with the Government of Quebec on having a position at least equal to theirs in this seminar or mini-summit. We are negotiating with the Government of Quebec about this problem. I wrote a letter to Mr. Landry this morning, to get us a little further down the road towards a consensus.

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● (1140)

[English]

HOUSING

REQUEST THAT MINISTER PERSUADE BANKS TO ROLL BACK MORTGAGE INTEREST INCREASES

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for housing. Despite a marginal drop in the central bank rate yesterday, the Toronto-Dominion Bank increased its one-year mortgage rate by one-half per cent. It has gone up by 2.5 per cent since January 1, from 10½ to 12¾ per cent. That means the average