

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, I cannot speak for my Progressive Conservative predecessor. I have no idea what happened when the Tory government was in office, but I can assure the hon. member that, as Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I did not receive or ask for the advice or guidance of Imperial Oil.

[English]

SUGGESTED TRUSTEESHIP FOR IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, the old response clearly is "I do not know what is going on," and it is absolutely true.

I have one other key point to address to the minister. I think the Liberal Party is setting up a travelling road show to bash the Tories in the province of Alberta. We feel that the minister has a responsibility to consumers in Canada. Therefore, I ask him this: in addition would he fulfil that responsibility by placing Imperial Oil under trusteeship and imposing a condition that the legislation will be in this House immediately? Also, will the government, either through negotiation or legislation, set up a procedure for restitution for the Canadian people?

An hon. Member: What do you think, Marc?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lawrence: Exxon-can.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I wish to reassure the hon. member that no one at Imperial Oil was consulted or invited to give advice in the development of the energy policy. That energy policy was developed by the Government of Canada for the benefit of all Canadians, and it appears to have been vindicated by some of the allegations which are in that report. I hope in the future we will get the support of opposition parties in the implementation of that policy as soon as possible.

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[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

NON-PARTICIPATION OF GOVERNMENT IN MONTREAL
ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Mrs. Thérèse Killens (Saint-Michel): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and has to do with the Montreal economic summit. Can the Prime Minister explain to the House the total absence, the non-participation of the Canadian government in the current economic summit in Montreal, knowing as we all do that most of the economic

serum injected in the bloodline of the city of Montreal comes from the federal government?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Madam Speaker. I am sorry I am unable to offer reasonable explanations for the absence of the federal government. Given the harbour facilities and the various accommodations of the federal government in and around the city of Montreal, including Mirabel, it is obvious that the participation of the federal government was important and should have been taken into account, considering our efforts to promote the city of Montreal. I can only think, as does the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that it amounts to electoral posturing rather than an endeavour to boost the interests of the residents of Montreal.

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[English]

HOUSING

SHORTAGE OF DWELLING UNITS IN VANCOUVER—
GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Chuck Cook (North Vancouver-Burnaby): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works, the minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and responsible for the housing crisis in Vancouver.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cook: An average of 2,500 people have been and are arriving in British Columbia each month. That means 2,500 people arrived last month and 2,500 will arrive this month. The vacancy rate is four tenths of 1 per cent. Actually it is a minus figure as many people have been forced to double up, move into substandard, unsanitary or illegal basement rooms. It is no longer a news story in Vancouver to find people living in automobiles or tents. I repeat, 2,500 people arrived in British Columbia last month, 2,500 will arrive this month, and 2,500 people will arrive next month. What is the minister doing to help alleviate this shortage of housing? What does he plan to do on an emergency basis, either in the short term or the long term, to lessen this severe situation which is the most severe in Canada? What will he do now?

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, in response to the very real concerns expressed by the hon. member opposite, I visited Vancouver on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of this week. I met with the mayor and with provincial officials to ensure that a number of the federal government's and CMHC's initiatives were taking place. For example, I had the opportunity, along with the mayor, of looking at some of the site locations for the new projects which were recently authorized under the increased social housing starts for the city of Vancouver.

In addition to that I had a meeting with the mayor to review the site location for B.C. Place. In co-operation with the developers of B.C. Place, the provincial minister of housing