

Oral Questions

trade agreement was entered into we improved the provisions for flow-through shares. We improved the provisions for flow-through shares in December of 1987, after the trade agreement was entered into, compared to June of 1987. How the Hon. Member in his warped thinking could come to that conclusion I do not know.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT**COMPLIANCE WITH CHARTER OF RIGHTS**

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. I have given him notice of it.

Has the Minister sought an opinion from the law officers of the Crown to ascertain if those clauses of Bill C-114, the conflict of interest Bill, relating to spouses are in violation of the Charter of Rights? If not, is he prepared to refer the matter to the Supreme Court for a ruling?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the notice that the Hon. Member gave me with respect to his question.

The fact is that the Hon. Member will know that as Minister of Justice I am mandated to review all legislation that comes before the House with respect to compliance with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We certainly understand that this particular provision is one of sensitivity. However, I think that we have addressed it in a way which protects the right of privacy of spouses. In cases where there is some relationship to the duties performed by a Member of Parliament, the performance of their duties which may be implicated by the interests of a spouse, then they have become legitimately matters of concern to the commission.

We have tried to deal with this matter in a sensitive way, understanding that spouses have the right to carry on independent lives and professions. I think that the approach we have taken in the legislation is an appropriate one which will meet the standards and tests of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**INTERNATIONAL BANKING CENTRES—MINISTER'S POSITION**

Miss Aileen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. It concerns a resolution adopted by the City of Toronto on January 11 condemning him and two other Toronto Ministers for their failure to ensure that the

international banking centre legislation was national in scope instead of being restricted to two locations.

Today, seven weeks after the City of Toronto reminded the Minister of his duty, will he tell the House what he proposes to do?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure that I follow the Hon. Member's question. The legislation was passed at the end of last year and it is law.

What I will point out, and I am sure she is very much aware of this, is that there have been a number of initiatives taken by the Government relating to financial institutions.

The international banking centres are one. The financial institution reform is another. Toronto has been a great beneficiary of that. Warburg's has come to Toronto. Deutsche Bank has bought an interest in a Toronto-based firm. Goldman Sachs is coming to Toronto. Three of the largest investment banking firms in Japan are joining the Toronto Stock Exchange. Security Pacific, a major bank in California, has invested in a major way into Burns Fry of Toronto. So Toronto has been a major beneficiary of the policies of the Government relating to financial institutions.

TORONTO CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Miss Aileen Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, apparently the Toronto Council is less enchanted than is the Minister. On February 17 the Council voted to launch a constitutional challenge to the Minister's legislation, an absolutely unheard of situation.

Further, the Minister is locked in battle with both the Province of Ontario and the Province of Quebec about financial institutions which is why the legislation has been delayed. I ask the Minister again if he intends to do anything to stop this process whereby he has been pitting region against region?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, that out of the mouths of the Liberal Party is quite outstanding. The Liberal Party was the Party that divided the country in a way that has never been seen before since Confederation.

The Hon. Member has to stand up to say where she stands and where her Party stands. Is she in favour of cancelling this? Is she going out to Vancouver and telling the people of Vancouver? Is she going to Montreal and telling the people of Montreal? Or is she wearing a downtown Toronto hat?

Miss Nicholson: National in scope is what I said.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I know that she is very much in the pockets of the people of Bay Street—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap.