

INSURANCE

LIABILITY COVERAGE—INCREASES IN PREMIUMS

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance. I was interested in her earlier answer today in the House with respect to her responsibility. Does her responsibility go so far as to guarantee Canadians, whether they be operators of day care centres, municipalities, or small businesses, that they will be able to afford insurance at rates and levels which they need in order to continue to operate? Will she provide such a guarantee?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, life does not include any guarantees.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Only for uninsured depositors.

Mrs. McDougall: We have told people who are having problems with insurance that we are prepared to help them work out their problems on availability. We will also take a look at problems having to do with affordability. Speaking of jurisdiction, let me remind the Hon. Member that premium structure falls under provincial jurisdiction.

MINISTERIAL REVIEW

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm the statement made by the insurance industry's spokesperson this morning to the effect that the Minister and her predecessors have been reviewing the situation in the insurance industry for the past four years? If that statement is correct, then why has it taken a crisis in the country before the Government is prepared to act?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that question is better directed to the Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

PETRO-CANADA

INCREASED PRICE OF GASOLINE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister promised consumers would benefit from deregulated rates. Even though gasoline prices are going down everywhere else in the world, they are going up in Canada. These price increases are being led by Petro-Canada. Why does the Minister allow this? After having raised its prices after a tax increase put forward by the Government, why has Petro-Canada twice increased its price in the last few months, further gouging the Canadian energy consumer?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any particular price increases imposed by Petro-Canada.

Oral Questions

An Hon. Member: You should be.

Miss Carney: But I would like to hope that Petro-Canada will be able to generate—

Mr. Broadbent: Where do you buy your gas?

An Hon. Member: Drive your own car for a change.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: If you don't watch out we will nationalize Petro-Canada.

Mr. Blaikie: It would be a good idea.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Riis: Go buy some gas, Pat.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Miss Carney: As I was saying before I was interrupted, I think the Hon. Member would agree with me that we want Petro-Canada to have sufficient revenues to develop Venture in his constituency.

SHARE ISSUE INQUIRY

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister admit that the reason Petro-Canada is increasing its prices is to create a better profit picture so that it can better present its dossier to the private sector and so that it can issue shares to the public, forcing Canadians to pay yet again for their own Crown corporation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, no.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Skeena, one question.

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

APPOINTMENT OF BOUNDARY NEGOTIATOR BY UNITED STATES

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I am sure he is aware that George Shultz has appointed Mr. Derwinski as the U.S. negotiator on boundaries between British Columbia and the United States.

Mr. Crosbie: He's been up before.

● (1500)

Mr. Fulton: Since the Minister's own Department has already—

Mr. Crosbie: Who do you think you are, Martin Luther?