

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is a vexatious question. All relevant details have been made public. As the Minister said yesterday, more will be released in the House of Commons at the appropriate time, as they should be. That was promised yesterday. But what we want is to try to protect as many jobs as possible. This Government—if I may, I think the question of the NDP Member had to do with jobs, unless I am mistaken—this Government created 137,000 new jobs in Quebec within 15 months, whereas the former Government created 37,000 new jobs in 55 months. It is an outstanding performance with respect to job creation—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. With great respect, this is now too long.

* * *

SPORTS**INSURANCE COVERAGE—DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY NATIONAL TEAMS**

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Scarborough Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport. It follows up on some of the concerns which have been expressed by my colleagues earlier this week. Press reports today concerning the inability of the National Ski Team to obtain liability insurance further highlight the serious problems affecting the insurance industry. Can the Minister tell the House what measures he will be taking to assist Canada's national sports teams obtain adequate insurance protection?

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, and as has already been stated, the insurance problem within North America is a global one. It is being dealt with by the provinces in co-operation with the Government. However, as far as the Canadian National Ski Team is concerned, I have been in constant contact with the ski associations and officials within the industry and within the associations. We met earlier today to identify a number of options which are available to us. We are actively continuing the pursuit of those options. I am satisfied and hopeful that we will have a satisfactory conclusion before the end of January so that the ski team can continue to compete in the World Cup.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1450)

INSURANCE**PREMIUM INCREASES—REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL ASSISTANCE**

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): Mr. Speaker, on November 4 I asked the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs what he was going to do about the insurance crisis. There is mounting evidence that insurance companies are acting in concert to increase premiums. These uncompetitive measures are causing many companies, municipalities, school boards, and even the Canadian Ski Team, as well as individuals, to go out of business or operate without insurance. Can the Minister do something now?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I can assure my hon. colleague that we are monitoring the situation with much interest. But if he had evidence showing a lack of information, we would gladly examine it.

REQUEST FOR INQUIRY

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): On November 4, Mr. Speaker, the same Minister replied to me that the issue had been sent to the Minister's office for action. I should like to state as a fact that the City of Anjou is paying this year \$300,000 more than last year in liability insurance alone.

Is the Minister now prepared, under the Combines Investigation Act, to fully investigate a situation which is becoming more and more serious each day because of unacceptable insurance increases?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, monitoring the situation on the market place remains the continuing responsibility of the Director under the Combines Investigation Act. He is monitoring the situation, and if he has reasons to believe that an investigation is warranted, he will initiate one immediately.

* * *

[English]

FARM CREDIT CORPORATION**PLAN TO HELP FARMERS FACING FORECLOSURES**

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Some 1,700 farm families are facing foreclosure and eviction from their land. However, they have been given a ray of hope through the Farm Credit Corporation plan to save their farms. Can the Minister indicate when this plan might come into force and effect?