

Oral Questions

these high interest rates. Will the minister stop repeating the common old refrain in his answers, or does he think that there is any Canadian left who believes what he is saying?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I read into the record some comments made in an editorial in *The Financial Post*, one of the leading financial newspapers in the country.

Clearly there are people in this country who do support the position we have taken. Those people have the foresight to understand that if we do not take this position, if we do not get the problem of inflation under control today, then the problems in the future, the bankruptcies that the hon. member is concerned about, will increase even more because of the fact that inflation will increase and interest rates will increase even further. That will lead to a much greater slowdown in the economy and bankruptcies will flow from that. The foresight we are using in the conduct of monetary policy, financial policy and economic policy today we believe will save us from the problems we had in 1981-82.

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JUSTICE

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Justice, I would like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Justice, and ask him about the reported hearing and judgment recently made by the Supreme Court of Canada on the basis of secrecy.

This may be the first time that the Supreme Court of Canada has decided that secrecy should prevail over one of its hearings and decisions. I think it is important to ask the minister whether the government is a party to this proceeding, whether it has any knowledge of the matter larger than the knowledge which the public has, and whether it is in favour or against the imposition of secrecy in this matter.

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I think it is an important question. In the absence of the minister who is away on government business, we do not have any knowledge other than what is reported in the press at this time. Of course, it is still before the Supreme Court, as my hon. friend knows, and I would suggest that we not comment further until the

Supreme Court decides what to do with this particular case.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the minister. I want to press him on this and ask whether any steps will be taken or any representations made by the government to the Supreme Court of Canada in connection with this matter, not because the Supreme Court of Canada is necessarily wrong in its decision, but just to provide greater assurance to Canadians that the public interest is being served in this matter.

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I obviously appreciate my hon. friend's concern. I am sure my colleague, the Minister of Justice, who will be back early next week, will take that into consideration. As I have suggested, it is before the Supreme Court and I do not think we should comment any further at this stage.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the President of the Treasury Board, my question is addressed to the acting minister.

Just a few months ago in an official report to the United Nations, the government told the world how wonderfully women are doing in Canada. Now the task force has stripped away the phoney veneer of equality and exposed the sexism and stereotypes that keep the work of women in the Public Service underutilized, underpaid and exploited. Given the minister's promise of immediate action early this week, what has the minister done to stop the discriminatory firing of women at twice the rate of men?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board accepted with appreciation the task force report and the great work done by the task force which was initiated by the Treasury Board.

The task force has indicated some legitimate concerns in terms of how the Public Service under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission does not permit women the opportunity that they should be provided. The President of the Treasury Board also pointed out that in those areas which are totally under the discretion