

Oral Questions

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is trying to dig for something that simply was not there. The importance of interest rates, and of lowering them, was widely recognized. For that reason the time we spent discussing interest rates was quite considerable.

As the Hon. Member knows, you cannot simply wave a wand and say that interest rates will drop. However, if industrialized countries collectively introduce those policies which will lead to lower inflation, that in turn will lead to lower interest rates. That is the direction we are embarked upon.

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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL**UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE**

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Science and Technology. It follows up on the question asked by my Leader with respect to possible instructions to the National Research Council for participation in the American star wars project.

The letter which my Leader referred to indicates that the NRC has been instructed to find \$6 million for the purpose of star wars research, despite the very sharp cuts imposed on the NRC last fall. Will the Minister inform the House whether such instructions have been given to the NRC, or has it been told to set aside \$6 million, or some other amount, for star wars, in the event that the Government's decision is positive?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member and his Leader are on little more than a fishing trip. In fact the NRC is hard enough pressed to find funds for its existing programs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Axworthy: That's right.

Mr. Siddon: The question is totally hypothetical and based on fiction rather than fact.

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, the Minister neglected to say that it is the cuts imposed by his Government which have backed the NRC into that kind of a corner.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

USE OF COUNCIL FUNDS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): My Party and I hope that there will not be a positive decision on Canadian co-operation in the star wars project. However, in that event could the Minister assure the House that there will be no cuts in Canadian Government spending on research and development in existing programs in order to pay for the militarization of our defence efforts in participation in star wars?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the National Research Council is

doing an outstanding job with the funds it has been voted by this Parliament. Any further use of those funds along the line suggested is a completely hypothetical fabrication of the Member's imagination.

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THE ADMINISTRATION**CALGARY OLYMPICS—LEGAL WORK CONTRACT**

Mr. John Nunziata (York South-Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It is with regard to his brother, Peter, who has been awarded all outside legal work for the Calgary Olympics.

I know that the Minister will say that this is not patronage, a conflict of interest, or Tory porkbarrelling, and that his brother, Peter, was appointed because he is a good, conscientious lawyer, and has an intimate knowledge of Olympic law.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nunziata: For the record, I would like to ask the Minister why the existing Olympics lawyer, Rob Rowley, was fired and replaced by his brother, Peter. Did the appointment have anything whatsoever to do with the fact that his brother, Peter, is the federal fund raising director for the Conservative Party in the Province of Alberta?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, that matter comes within my jurisdiction as Minister of Justice. It has nothing to do with the Secretary of State for External Affairs who, I doubt, knows anything about the matter as he is not concerned with legal matters.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: That's right.

Mr. Crosbie: I get the impression, Mr. Speaker, that the question is not for the purpose of getting information, but to allow that crowd of hyenas to jeer, laugh, and roar.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: If the question is for the purpose of obtaining information, I can inform the House that I appoint legal agents for the Department of Justice. In October I appointed Mr. Peter Clark to provide legal advice with respect to documents associated with the funding of the Olympic Winter Games, capital contribution agreements, and other such work.

I knew the hon. gentleman would have some interest in this matter, he having been on the phone poking around Calgary. I had a report from my officials. They report that they are extremely pleased with the legal service provided by Mr. Clark, who will continue to provide them no matter what innuendo or insinuations the hon. gentleman brings forward in his usual rodent-like fashion.