

Oral Questions

I am also concerned about some of the wage settlements that have been brought in by governments. I have pointed out that the provincial governments have been increasing in the 6.5 per cent to 7 per cent range, whereas the the federal government is increasing at 4.2 per cent.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Indian Affairs and it concerns the Akwesasne Reserve in my riding.

Last night violence broke out again in the Mohawk community of Akwesasne. Four people, members of a search party looking for a missing native elder, were beaten with baseball bats and sent to hospital. Gunfire was reported and electrical power in the village of St. Regis was knocked out.

Can the minister report to us on the progress of her negotiations with the American authorities? Has she finally convinced the Americans to take the necessary measures to restore order on the U.S. side of the Akwesasne Reserve?

Hon. Shirley Martin (Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's concern for the reserve within his riding and I certainly share that concern with him.

We have had ongoing negotiations, talks and, certainly, action by the Ontario and Quebec policing groups to try to give whatever assistance is necessary to Grand Chief Mitchell. There have been discussions with the American officials. I am confident that they are quite aware of our concern and the need for action in this particular case. We will continue our discussions with them and watch carefully over the weekend.

We have a deputy minister on staff here in Ottawa who will be monitoring carefully over the weekend and we will continue to make the necessary contacts to assure that all help is given.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Americans do not wait until it is too late before they move ahead to provide the necessary protection.

My supplementary question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue.

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[Translation]

CUSTOMS

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): My second question is directed to the Minister of National Revenue. The minister is of course aware that Canada Customs at the Cornwall port of entry is located on the reserve in other words—on Cornwall Island.

What steps has the minister taken or does he intend to take to ensure the safety of Canadian customs officers and all users of the Cornwall bridge?

[English]

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that Revenue Canada and myself, as minister, have been quite concerned about the potentially dangerous situation on Cornwall Island for some time. That is why we have taken numerous precautionary steps, including agreement with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and provincial police forces to supplement the forces already stationed around the customs office buildings. That is why we have put additional security measures in the building and are currently expanding and improving those operations.

As far as the safety of the customs officers are concerned, I can assure the hon. member that every step has been taken.

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THE ECONOMY

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a question is for the Minister of Finance. Business and consumer bankruptcies across the country are rising dangerously because of the government's high interest rate policy. Last month alone, there were more bankruptcies, over 4,100, than in the worst month of the worst year on record in the country, 1982. The Premiers, the CLC, the House finance committee and the CMA have all called for interest rate cuts.