

thereafter. Surely the Hon. Member could look at this in the context of the broad performance of the economic policy of the Government, which, even by his standards, has been very, very good.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION CONCERNING FUTURE SALE OF CANADAIR

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and concerns contradictory statements regarding the future of Canadair.

Yesterday, the Minister announced he did not expect Canadair to be sold before the month of June. Meanwhile, the President of the Canada Development Investment Corporation announced on television that he was expecting offers to purchase Canadair before the end of March. Who is right? And can the Minister guarantee that the Government will not hold a fire sale for Canadair, as it did in the case of de Havilland?

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre that there will be no fire sale and there has not been any fire sale with respect to de Havilland. The Hon. Member should remember that we indicated we would be willing to discuss the possible sale of Canadair. We have had inquiries. At the present time I must admit to the Hon. Member that no firm deal is being negotiated.

What Mr. Marshall indicated yesterday was the hope that the three people who are now discussing the possibility of making a deal with Canadair might firm up one or more of their bids before the end of March in anticipation of possibly making a deal by June. However, let us end this nonsense about a fire sale with respect to such Crown corporations.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION BEFORE ANY POSSIBLE SALE

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, now that the Steering Committee of the Regional Development Committee has ensured that there will be full consideration of the de Havilland sale in the next two weeks, will the Minister ensure that we can be protected against a fire sale of Canadair by promising the House that there will be full consideration by a parliamentary committee of any sale of Canadair before the deal is closed?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, again the Hon. Member was

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anticipating his next question. He did not hear what I told him in answer to his first question.

I indicated that at this point we do not have a possible purchaser who has money in hand and is proposing a deal with respect to Canadair. How can I talk in hypothetical terms about referring something that does not exist to any committee of this House?

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INSURANCE

INCREASE IN PREMIUMS

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance. The property and casualty insurance industry is in a state of disarray namely because of the outlandish liability claims being awarded by the courts. Now average Canadians with excellent driving records are asked to bear the burden of high rates.

Before we become the California of the North, what will the federal Government do, along with the provincial Governments, to curb these astronomical settlements—

Mr. Blaikie: Nationalize the insurance industry.

Mr. Attewell: —and stop excessive rate increases for average Canadians?

Mr. Murphy: Go to Manitoba.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, given the Hon. Member's background I am sure he knows that the premium increases that we have seen were designed by the companies in order to meet an important solvency consideration. They are in the hands of the provincial Governments because they fall under contract law which is provincial jurisdiction. The court settlements that have been made also fall into provincial jurisdiction.

We are planning to co-operate fully with the task force in Ontario. Our policy is to develop higher standards for property and casualty insurance dealing with solvency and the capital base, which are very much a part of our role.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

ALLEGED DISCLOSURE OF IMPORTANT DATA TO CANADAIR COMPETITORS

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board and relates to Canadair. Last week the leader of the machinists' union and the president of Canadair's survival committee denounced the disclosure of important data to Canadair competitors. Here is my question: Why did you give confidential information to a