

Oral Questions

and Clothing Board submitted at the end of last December, which says that unless special protective measures are taken, between 40,000 and 60,000 jobs will disappear in the near future, does the Minister intend to implement many of the Board's recommendations, especially to restrict imports of these products, to adopt a program of duty free imports and also to adopt a new national textile policy?

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Hon. Member whom I commend for the interest that he has taken in the textile and clothing industry in Canada, we of course have noted many of the recommendations in the report and specifically now have discussions ongoing among the various Departments to try to work out a satisfactory arrangement that will ensure that there will be a viable textile and clothing industry in Canada.

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INSURANCE**LIABILITY COVERAGE—DIFFICULTIES FACED BY SMALL BUSINESSES**

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance. Now that the Minister has met the Ontario Minister responsible for insurance and understands that insurance falls within the jurisdiction of the federal Government, can the Minister tell the House of Canadians what she is going to do to help the thousands of small businesses that are at the risk of losing everything they have worked for because they have no liability insurance?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I have always understood what my responsibilities are and I do not need any lectures from Liberal Members on that. I met in a very positive way with—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deans: You win more with smiles.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. McDougall: I met with the industry this morning. We have agreed on a number of things that we can do. I had already been working, as I have told the House, on a longer term policy that will prevent this kind of boom and bust cycle in the future, or at least help dampen it. In the short term, as problems are brought to us, we are resolving them with the industry in a very hard-headed way.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, that translates into nothing.

[Translation]

SOLVENCY GUIDELINES FOR INSURANCE COMPANIES

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): The Superintendent of Insurance Canada establishes solvency guidelines for insurance companies. I wonder if the Minister could confirm whether guidelines are being observed and whether he could table these guidelines for the information of the House.

[English]

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I have told the Hon. Member many times that I will be bringing forward policies dealing with solvency and with the capital base which is part of this boom and bust cycle. We are dealing with this problem in a very realistic way and are helping people so that this situation does not reach this stage in the future again.

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[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS**GULF-ULTRAMAR TRANSACTION—REQUEST FOR INQUIRY**

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Last Thursday and Friday in the House, the Prime Minister said that he would look into the matter of investigating a possible violation by Ultramar of Section 32 of the Combines Investigations Act, because Ultramar set a pre-condition prohibiting the sale of the refinery to a possible competitor on the Quebec market.

Mr. Speaker, my question is as follows. Could the Minister inform the House today whether he has asked the Director responsible for combines investigations to start an investigation immediately of this important matter?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, the question is entirely hypothetical. We will deal with the matter as soon as a transaction takes place and we are aware of the terms.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In that case, how can the Minister say he defends the interests of consumers when he refuses to order immediately an investigation of a question that the Prime Minister referred to in the House last week as an important matter?

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post): Mr. Speaker, I think we were answering these questions over and over all last week. I would like to remind my hon. colleague that we have made sure, I and my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and