

whether he would go as far as personally calling the Ultramar people to try and find a solution?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers and Montrealers are now aware that while the refineries were closing one after the other in Montreal East, this Hon. Member made a basic choice. His loyalty and dedication is to the Liberal Party and not his constituents. That is where he failed in his commitment to his constituents. That was his mistake.

Mr. Malépart: Go on, go on!

Mr. Mulroney: As far as we are concerned, we are discussing the issue with interested parties in trying to save a Quebec industry, instead of undermining it, as the Liberals did.

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[English]

THE ECONOMY

INTEREST RATE LEVELS—ACTIONS OF BANK OF CANADA

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance who, a moment ago, was talking about magic wands. He knows full well that every week the central bank intervenes in the money markets and buys and sells treasury bills to influence, if you will, the rates for that particular week. In a sense I am going to repeat a question. If, as the Minister said in the House of Commons in response to my question yesterday, this is a very temporary situation, will the Minister intervene with the central bank to ensure that tomorrow afternoon the interest rate does not go up, because I would suggest that, if it does, it will send out a very negative signal right across the country in terms of confidence in economic development?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am not, in a sense going to, answer this question that has now been put three times. What I am going to do—

Mr. Broadbent: You didn't answer it yet.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I did answer it very clearly the first time the question was put. I would say to the Hon. Member that I look for his support when we come to Budget time. As the Hon. Member knows, if he has been speaking to people in the market-place, there is some uncertainty as to what is going to be in the Budget. However, I would look for his support in reinforcing the resolve which we have toward getting the Budget deficit under control and ensuring in that way that we will get interest rates down. A drop in the budgetary deficit is what will lead to lower interest rates, and that is what the Hon. Member wants and what I want.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER INTERVENE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance will know that earlier this week the chief

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economic Minister of Japan indicated that there are times when it is necessary for the Government to intervene in the market-place. Does the Minister of Finance not think that now is that time since interest rates are creeping up as a result of, in a sense, speculation in the money markets? Is it not time for the Minister to take his responsibility seriously and intervene with the central bank by stopping any further increase at this critical time for interest rates?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I responded to the question of the Leader of the Opposition and in that response I did indicate that the Government of Canada, through the Bank of Canada, does moderate influences upward and downward in both the exchange markets—

Mr. Broadbent: A magic wand, is it?

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): If the Leader of the New Democratic Party would listen, he might learn something. We moderate those influences in the money markets both in exchange rates and in interest rates. The Bank of Canada has been doing this on a regular basis over the past few months.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

POSSIBLE REOPENING OF PORT-CARTIER—PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. If I wanted to take the same simplistic approach, I would remind him that on September 13, 1979, under a Conservative Government, it was bang, bang, bang for ITT at Port-Cartier, but I won't do that because that is not the point I want to make today. What does interest me, Mr. Speaker, is that we now have a chance to reopen the Port-Cartier plant, and the Prime Minister is well aware of the proposal made by Cascade Paper and the Quebec Government. Why can't the Prime Minister, who has let the people of Port-Cartier think he is going to reopen this plant, deliver the goods now?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): The Hon. Member may have a point to make, but why all the false statements?

Mr. Malépart: Look who's talking.

Mr. Mulroney: Why mislead the House and the people of this country? The fact is there is no connection between September 13, 1979 . . . in fact, this company received grants from the provincial government at the time in order to set up . . . Things did not work out on the North Shore. In some areas, the unemployment rate went as high as forty-five per cent. For years, for five years, the people of Port-Cartier asked the Hon. Member's Government for help. The answer was