

Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. In view of the fact that it has been repeatedly stated in the House that Petro-Canada is a follower, not a leader in the market-place, why is Petro-Canada, in several communities, reportedly leading the way now that the price trend seems to be going upward?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, there are two reasons for fluctuations in gasoline prices; one is the cost of crude and the other is the marketing that goes on in certain areas. Right now we are seeing price wars going on in the market areas and prices are going up and down. There is a chance that Petro-Canada's price may be higher in one area and lower in another, but it is the market wars that is causing these price fluctuations today.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Yesterday in the House he claimed that the present conflict of interest guidelines are stricter than the guidelines under the former Tory Government. Yet, under those guidelines, the families of cabinet Ministers had to put all of their business interests into a blind trust or sell them. How can he claim what he claimed in the House yesterday?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, he wants an opinion. I stand by what I said. We were not referring to the 1979 guidelines. The Code that was tabled in September, 1985, was stricter than the Code of the previous administration which he supported when he was sitting on this side of the House.

REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

Mr. George Baker (Gander—Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, in the Prime Minister's letter to all Members of Parliament he gives the Deputy Prime Minister credit for recommendations and says on page 4:

Obviously, from time to time, circumstances may arise that call for an impartial person to conduct an investigation as to fact.

Therefore, my supplementary question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Is it not time to adopt his own recommendation and start that investigation so that we can get on in the House with the important business of this nation?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, if I had any difficulties in discharging my responsibility with respect to the Code of Conduct I would consider his advice to me. However, I have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that there was full, complete compliance with the Code of Conduct by the Minister.

Oral Questions

AGRICULTURE

CANADA-U.S. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS—REQUEST THAT FARMERS BE REPRESENTED ON ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): My question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister for International Trade has shown a poor understanding of agriculture by lumping agriculture with the food and beverage processing industries on the Free Trade Advisory Council. The Minister of Agriculture will know that the interests of farmers are often diametrically opposed to those of the food processing industry. Does the Minister consider the interests of farmers of so little importance that they do not need a separate seat on the Free Trade Advisory Council?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, there is no question in my mind that the Minister of International Trade and the Secretary of State for External Affairs have full knowledge and understanding of the importance and, indeed, the complexity in relation to the bilateral trade issue between Canada and the United States. Indeed, if the Hon. Member wants to be a little more patient, I think he will see that there is a complete understanding, because in the very near future the names of the membership of that sectorial committee will be made public. There will be some interesting revelations and information at the time that list becomes public, which I would expect to be within the next 10 days or two weeks.

Mr. Hovdebo: What agriculture needs is a separate member.

REQUEST THAT THE MINISTER DEMAND REPRESENTATION FOR PRODUCERS

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister give us some assurance that he will demand full representation for agricultural producers on the Free Trade Advisory Council?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I just asked the Hon. Member to be a little more patient. I am perfectly satisfied that the representations that he has made, to this point at least, have been taken completely into consideration by the Minister for International Trade.

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CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

PROFITS OF WHEAT MILLERS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, my question is directed to the Parliamentary Secretary. In light of recent reports that Canadian wheat millers are receiving profits of some 7.6 per cent of sales while American wheat millers only receive 1.9 per cent profit of sales, what action is