

northern consumers are afforded the same protection as consumers in the south?

[Translation]

**Mr. Ouellet:** Mr. Speaker, obviously, my department would like to give all Canadians equal services, regardless of where they live. Still, as all other departments, mine has budgetary constraints.

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### CRIMINAL CODE

#### REQUEST BY ABITIBI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR REFERENDUM ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Solicitor General of Canada. Can he tell the House whether he has read the resolution of the Chamber of Commerce of Abitibi requesting that a referendum be held on capital punishment at the time of the next election; and also tell us whether he considers that request reasonable which would allow the Canadian people to express their wishes with regard to that very special matter?

[English]

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, I have received a copy of the resolution passed by the Chamber of Commerce of Abitibi on this subject. I can only say to the hon. member that it is not our tradition to have that type of referendum on important subjects. Parliaments are elected to deal with these matters.

#### SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION ON GUN CONTROL—GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the increase in the numbers of culpable and non-culpable homicides by the use of firearms, will the Solicitor General now move from his study process and bring forth for examination a bill to restrict certain guns and control others?

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, as I have pointed out to the House on several occasions, we do have a special group within our department studying the present laws in order to make recommendations for reform and amendment. We are also having a meeting in Ottawa on Monday and Tuesday of next week of firearm registrars in order to get their opinions on these matters. While I want to speed up the report on this subject, I think we should recognize that this is a complicated matter and there are no simple solutions or panaceas. I think it is better to wait a few months and do the proper thing rather than do something just for show right away.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that Mr. Stevens said in the *Globe and Mail* that the minister said the same thing a year ago, does he not think he now has enough data, facts and evidence in reference to culpable and non-culpable homicides to bring forth a bill that is practical, realistic and workable?

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the date in that report is correct. I do know we started this study several months ago, and because of certain serious crimes committed recently with guns we have upgraded the status of that particular working group and have established a date for the completion of its report. We hope to have that report by the middle of the summer.

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### FINANCE

#### EFFECT OF INCREASE IN MONEY SUPPLY—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, as the Governor of the Bank of Canada appears to be prepared to allow interest rates, including mortgage rates, to rise as a mechanism for enforcing anti-inflationary discipline upon the economy, will the Minister of Finance tell the House whether he agrees with the Governor's position and, in that circumstance, whether he would approve such an increase in the cost of money, bearing in mind the consequences such a policy will have on housing demands and business investment intentions?

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Governor of the bank pointed out in his recent address to the Life Underwriters' Association that he contemplated an expansion in the money supply sufficient to accommodate expansion in the economy, but not an amount that would provoke inflation. The hon. member really ought to make up his mind. He has spent a good deal of time during the past few weeks worrying about over-expansion in the money supply. Obviously, if there is to be any discipline of the money supply, interest rates will be affected.

#### SUGGESTED ASSISTANCE TO SECTORS OF ECONOMY AFFECTED BY HIGH INTEREST RATES

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance had made up his mind a little earlier he might have been able to introduce a budget prior to June 23. In any event, if it is decided by the government that higher interest rates are required, does the minister propose to initiate any special assistance to sectors of the economy such as housing, which will be particularly hard hit by a higher interest rate structure?

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is dealing with budgetary matters and he will have an opportunity to express his views shortly.

#### REQUEST FOR ESTIMATE OF CASH DEFICIT

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, with government cash balances having fallen \$1.2 billion since January and, as the minister has indicated, our cash deficits this year will be \$3 billion, will the minister indicate if that is still his estimate of our cash deficit, bearing in mind the foreseeable unemployment insurance deficit and