

Oral Questions

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the last time I looked, Mr. Brock was not the Secretary of International Trade but the Secretary of Labour in the United States. Perhaps the hon. gentleman might want to update his reference library.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Get your amanuensis to fix the question.

Mr. Nielsen: With respect to the statement of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, he was expressing Government policy, the approach of the Government to discussions with the United States, and that is still the approach unaltered.

Mr. Crosbie: Straight from the heart, Jean.

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, it is true that the U.S. Secretary changed departments, but the fact remains, he still is a senior member of the U.S. administration.

INQUIRY WHETHER UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, MEDICARE,
AND PENSIONS WILL BE SUBJECTS OF NEGOTIATION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether unemployment insurance, medicare and pensions will be subjects of negotiation with the United States. I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister: Isn't it time to tell the United States that this country is not for sale and its survival is not negotiable?

[English]

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the question posed by the Hon. Member.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Miss MacDonald: Obviously, he has not read the statement of the American Ambassador to Canada who said recently in a television interview: "I would like to put these fears with regard to Canada's social programs to rest". The United States is not without a structure of social support of its own . . . and we have no more interest in asking Canadians to determine such matters for us than you do in having us determine them for Canadians."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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BANKS AND BANKING

CANADIAN COMMERCIAL BANK—ESTEY COMMISSION INQUIRY
TESTIMONY

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Finance who will know that at the judicial inquiry the Director of Inspec-

tions for the office of the Inspector General of Banks said, under oath, that it would cost \$350 million to ensure the continued operation of the bank. Was she aware of that information when she made her recommendation to the House?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, once again we are getting into a situation of trying to judge numbers in this House. The proper context for dealing with all of the balance sheet items—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: What are you here for?

Mr. Cassidy: What's a billion, Barbara?

Mrs. McDougall: The proper context for dealing with this type of information is in the Estey inquiry. That is where the final recommendations will be made.

Mr. Broadbent: You are responsible here.

Mrs. McDougall: That is why we established the commission.

MINISTER'S MARCH STATEMENT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, what is \$100 million in this case?

In the House on March 28 the Minister of State for Finance said that the support package in the amount of \$255 million would be sufficient to ensure the continuing operation of the bank. Under oath the individual who is responsible for inspections for the bank—

● (1430)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Hon. Member have a question?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: No.

Mr. Riis: The question is simply this, Mr. Speaker. Since the Minister obviously had that information at the time, did she therefore intentionally mislead the House when she said that \$255 million was adequate?

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Broadbent: She won't answer questions that are in order.

Mr. Speaker: I think I know what the questioner is trying to get at, but I think the Hon. Member also knows that our rules do not allow us to do indirectly what cannot be done directly.