

Oral Questions

If he is talking about the aerospace industry, and we now have it clearly in the words of the Minister of Energy that these choices are made by the Prime Minister according to his strategy, will the Government clearly target Bristol Aircraft for the awarding of the contract for the CF-5 so we can restore the aerospace industry in that city?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the decisions this Government takes are Government decisions, not decisions by the Prime Minister. This was a Government decision. The President of the Treasury Board explained the rationale very clearly in this House on many occasions. I wish the Hon. Member would listen to that carefully because in it he will find his answer.

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TRADE

AUTO PACT—CABINET COMMITTEE MEETING INQUIRY

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. I want to quote from this secret memo which—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Langdon: —which reached us—

An Hon. Member: In a brown envelope.

Mr. Langdon: —and which indicates that “the trade negotiator’s office continue in its fact-finding exercise with the U.S.” with respect to the free trade discussions with the U.S. Does the Minister deny that the P and P subcommittee of Cabinet met on October 27 to consider precisely the recommendations coming from the free trade negotiator’s office and that, in those recommendations, there were precisely these reports that discussions with the U.S. on the Auto Pact have been taking place?

Some Hon. Members: Great speech!

● (1140)

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I was not at that meeting and I cannot comment specifically on that. However, I will repeat what I said to his Leader. The Government fully recognizes the importance of the automotive industry to his community, the community of his Leader, and to the entire country. We will not do anything which will undermine the capacity of that industry to create jobs, economic growth or exports, in any part of the country where it is possible to do that. That is the objective which the Government is following and will continue to follow.

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, how is it possible for the Government do justify its Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde approach? The Government tells the House of Commons one thing with respect to this issue and tells the negotiators from the United States precisely the opposite. This memo proves that. I ask the Government to admit how wrong-headed it has been in its approach.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I totally reject that. During the past two years the Government has achieved a record level of new investment activity in the automotive industry. Surely that is a sign of the commitment of the Government to the automotive industry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Langdon: The Auto Pact.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The Hon. Member yells, “the Auto Pact”. Yes, the Auto Pact got this all started, but he knows full well that the commitment of General Motors is way above the requirements of the Auto Pact.

Mr. Langdon: That’s one firm.

Mr. Broadbent: What about Chrysler and Ford?

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

REALLOCATION OF \$57 MILLION INTO EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

Mr. Bob Pennock (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications. Last night during the Adjournment Debate, in response to queries about the \$57 million which were unaccounted for in the CBC, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister stated that these entries have now been reallocated into their proper expense accounts. Is the Minister satisfied that the reallocation of the \$57 million has been completed and entered into the proper expense accounts? Although the Auditor General found no evidence of misappropriation of resources, how can the Government be assured, without an independent audit, that there are no losses and that it was only an administration problem as was stated last night?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for his question. I am informed that the CBC has indeed now made a specific allocation of these accounts under its new financial management system. As a result of that, the staff of the Auditor General has gone back into the CBC to verify whether this allocation is correct resulting from last year’s accounts, and whether it forms the basis for a proper allocation in the future.