

Oral Questions

has denied the people of Quebec news in both our official languages for almost three months now. The minister knows also that the union, through three mediation attempts by the Department of Labour principally, has made substantial concessions, and that the latest mediator appointed by the Minister of Labour quit last Monday, blaming the government and indicating that management was not serious. Is it now the minister's intention to urge his colleague, the Minister of Labour, to appoint a mediator with special powers to initiate real and serious negotiations so that this matter can come to a positive conclusion for both sides, plus the people of Quebec?

Hon. Francis Fox (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, we have indicated our interest on this side of the House in seeing the type of service the hon. member refers to resumed as soon as possible in the province of Quebec. The mediator referred to was, of course, appointed by my colleague the Minister of Labour. I have not seen the exact report to which the hon. member refers, but it would be up to the Minister of Labour, upon consideration of this report, to decide what action he wants to take. On my side, I am continuing my discussions with the Minister of Labour in the hope that we may find some way of settling this strike as soon as possible.

REQUEST FOR ACTION BY MINISTER OF LABOUR

Mr. Mark Rose (Mission-Port Moody): I think perhaps, Madam Speaker, what is now needed is an outside, independent mediator. Failing that, will the Deputy Prime Minister undertake to this House that, failing the efforts of an independent or outside mediator, if one is appointed and fails in his duties—and hopefully that will not happen—he will consult with the Minister of Labour urging him, telling him if necessary, to assume his responsibilities and have this matter settled, even if it means calling both parties into his office and keeping them there until it is settled?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I have every confidence that the Minister of Labour will discharge his responsibilities in a very acceptable way.

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CUSTOMS TARIFF

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF DUTY ON BODY ARMOUR

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Finance. Many individual policemen are investigating the purchase of body armour in order to protect themselves against serious acts of violence. The cost of this protection is very high but many individual policemen would like to purchase it on their own. Good quality body armour is presently imported under Canada Customs No. 56300 at a duty of 25 per cent, while police riot helmets, firemen's helmets and safety helmets are imported under Canada Customs No. 569401 tax-free.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Would the hon. member please come to his question.

Mr. Hopkins: Will the minister take an in-depth look at this tariff item with a view to removing the 25 per cent duty on body armour if it is being purchased individually or departmentally by law enforcement agencies across Canada?

Mr. Nielsen: It is also made in Canada.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke has made numerous representations on that subject. I would like to point out to him that as a result of his efforts the department officials responsible for enforcing tariffs made a thorough inquiry into the importation of bullet-proof vests. I remind him that we cannot accept duty-free imports of bullet-proof vests produced in the United States because we do have Canadian manufacturers who market that product, and they are making every effort to improve it since it is used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other law enforcement agencies throughout Canada. By affording protection to those Canadian manufacturers who continue working with the RCMP and other police forces to sell a better product we may be able to extend the market for such products to all police forces in Canada and even in the United States.

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[English]

KREVER ROYAL COMMISSION

REPRESENTATION MADE BY COUNSEL FOR RCMP

Hon. Allan Lawrence (Durham-Northumberland): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General who I know has now had time to study the provincial report of Mr. Justice Horace Krever who was sitting as a province of Ontario royal commissioner taking a look at the whole question of disclosure of medical records. During the course of those hearings counsel for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police assured the royal commissioner it had made complete disclosure to him and the force had not used any medical information, however obtained, for disruptive purposes. One of the main conclusions of the royal commission was, and I quote: "The RCMP... must have known that this representation was untrue." They must have known it was untrue, of course, because the matter had come before the McDonald commission.

I would ask the Solicitor General from whom, how and why would counsel for the RCMP have received instructions to make a representation that was blatantly untrue to the royal commissioner?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General): Madam Speaker, I have indeed studied the report of the Krever commission. I do not accept the version the hon. member has given of the