

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Does the minister not acknowledge that the use of Canadian taxpayers' funds to assist in the construction of aluminium smelters in South Africa is extremely unfair to the British Columbians and Quebecers employed in the aluminium industry who pay those taxes?

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade):** No, Mr. Speaker. It is our expectation that any excess supplies on world markets will disappear by the time the proposed refinery comes into full operation. We do not believe it will have any adverse impact on the Canadian aluminium industry.

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[Translation]

**PUBLISHING INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage decided to allow the sale of Ginn Publishing to Paramount only for fear of being sued by Paramount.

• (1435)

The *Star* quoted Paramount's lawyer, Mr. Grover, who yesterday ruled out the possibility of Paramount suing the minister if only the minister had stood up to them.

My question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Now that I have reassured the minister that he no longer has any reason to fear being sued, will he do what he should have done from the beginning in the Ginn Publishing case and cancel the sale to Paramount?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised to discover that our colleague's advisors are Americans. Mine are Canadians and I believe what they tell me.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, for the minister's information, it is the Toronto lawyer of Paramount who made that statement. Toronto is still in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Tell the minister that! It is not very far from Kingston either.

Not only do we read English-language newspapers but we usually read a contract before we sign it. Since Paramount's lawyer himself expresses serious doubts about his client suing the Canadian government, it would be rather surprising if the government's lawyers had produced a legal opinion without any reservations that would have prevented the minister from going back on the deal.

Does the minister, who has failed miserably in his first test as defender of Canada's cultural heritage, not believe that he should table the legal opinion to show that he is really above reproach on this?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to know that the lawyers in question are Canadians but I believe that they serve an American master.

As for the legal opinion, I am pleased to be asked this question in this House after being asked the same question outside the House, as this opinion contains quotations from Cabinet documents which, according to the settlement negotiated between a previous government and this one, cannot be presented in this House. I abide by this rule.

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**ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

On February 14, I asked the minister why he had approved a \$60 million credit for the construction of a new aluminium smelter in South Africa, when this plant will be competing directly against Canadian producers.

The aluminium industry is very important for Canada, especially British Columbia and Quebec, since almost 10,000 people are employed in our ten smelters. These plants are located in Shawinigan and in nine other ridings represented by members of the Official Opposition. In recent years, hundreds of Quebecers—

**The Speaker:** Order. Would the hon. member please put his question.

**Mr. Ringma:** Does the minister admit that this new aluminium smelter in South Africa poses a direct threat to the job security of thousands of workers in Quebec and British Columbia?

[English]

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade):** No, Mr. Speaker, the smelter in South Africa will not come on stream until late 1996. I do not believe at that time there will be any adverse impact on the prospects of Canadian aluminium companies and workers.

• (1440)

[Translation]

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a supplementary question. Does the minister not agree that the markets normally control excess production through spending cuts or plant closures? Is the minister implying, by predicting a better balance between supply and demand, that we can expect more cuts and layoffs in the Canadian aluminium industry?