

Oral Questions

Considering that human rights groups have evidence that China uses prison slave labour in producing export products, how can the Secretary of State for External Affairs reconcile the Minister for International Trade's business as usual approach in endorsing China's membership in the GATT with her government's so-called human rights policy? When will we have some honesty and integrity in our policy on China?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear that in my discussions with ministers I met in China last week, I discussed and put forward the position of the Government of Canada very forcefully as it relates to human rights.

With regard to the question on the GATT, it is in the interests of Canada, of Canadian traders who are trying to export into China and create jobs here in Canada, to have clear trade policies from the Chinese, a more transparent entry into that market, a more transparent understanding of what their trade policies are and what their industrial policies are so that we can trade more effectively into that market.

On the question of sales of products that are being made in prisons, we have checked very carefully with the Chinese. We have been told that none of the products they have sold to us are made in prisons and we are monitoring that question very, very closely.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Five years ago the Canadian Government funded a \$15 million feasibility study into what could be the world's largest disaster, the Yangtze River Three Gorges dam project in China.

The feasibility study and the proposed project have been highly criticized by major Chinese and international environmentalists and human rights activists.

Will the government assure us that it will not put any taxpayers' dollars or loan guarantees into the development of the Three Gorges dam project?

[Translation]

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for External Relations and Minister of State (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the recent decision by the Chinese government to proceed with the Three Gorges project.

Because of current budgetary restrictions, CIDA is withdrawing from this project. Conflicting priorities mean we can no longer use our limited development assistance funds for this project. CIDA financed the feasibility study submitted to the Chinese government in 1988, as well as a number of complementary studies that were interrupted in June 1989 following the events at Tiananmen Square. The minister has said repeatedly that it was the Chinese government's decision to start the Three Gorges development project. The studies financed by CIDA were only one aspect of the project, and Canada has now informed the Chinese government of its decision.

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[English]

DOFASCO

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister campaigned in Hamilton during the last federal election saying his trade policies, his tax policies, his dollar policies were going to lead to good times for Hamilton. Last week, Dofasco announced that it was closing the doors on the first foundry which started that operation 70 years ago.

Why is the Prime Minister letting Hamiltonians down? What can he say now to 1,200 people in my riding who were last week declared redundant, largely as a result of the policies of his government?

Hon. John McDermid (Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I guess the hon. member might understand that Canadian industry is going through a restructuring and modernization process.