

Oral Questions

Madam Deputy Speaker: Normally, the first questions asked by the New Democratic Party would have the possibility of one question and two supplementaries.

I am really trying very hard to see the connection between the first question asked and the one being asked by the member now. Maybe he would want to rephrase his question and put it now.

Mr. Rodriguez: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague for Windsor—St. Clair pointed out that there is a danger of 26,000 jobs being lost in de Havilland.

My question deals with job losses.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Then the hon. member will put his question now.

Mr. Rodriguez: I understand why they are so sensitive about this on both sides.

Can this government tell the people of Canada in what month, in what year and in what decade can we expect to get the changes to the Bankruptcy Act that will provide justice to workers who have lost their jobs as a result of bankruptcies?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, the government does share the concern expressed by the hon. member.

I can assure him that it is a matter that is under very active consideration. I hope that in the not too distant future we will be able to respond to the very valid point that the hon. member made. I just ask him to be patient a little longer.

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JUSTICE

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Madam Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Justice.

Recently, there was a very significant court case in British Columbia. The Gitksan—Wet'suwet'en people, we understand, are going to take this to appeal. Eventually, it will end up in the Supreme Court.

There is a large number of people in British Columbia and in other parts of Canada who feel that it would save a lot of time and money if this appeal was directly referred to the Supreme Court.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hon. member will put his question now.

Mr. Wilbee: Madam Speaker, my question is to the justice minister.

Can this case not be referred directly to the Supreme Court, rather than going through the various appeal processes which will involve a lot of funding and a lot of time, which is unnecessary at this time?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, technically and theoretically it is possible to refer questions to the Supreme Court of Canada.

We have not had a formal request to do so. We are undergoing discussions with parties to the case. We are no longer party to the case since the claim against us was dismissed.

I would point out, though, that it is unusual to refer a matter as factually complex as this to the Supreme Court of Canada. I think all the parties would want to consider what was the best way to clarify the issues. It is a case of very complex fact in law.

Our disposition is to be as co-operative as possible. We are having informal discussions, but as yet have had no formal request from any of the parties.

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DE HAVILLAND

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister, and it is with regard to the proposed sale of de Havilland.

It has been confirmed this morning in writing by the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Mr. Fred Doucet, the former chief of staff and friend of the Prime Minister, has been hired as the chief lobbyist to lobby both the government and Investment Canada on behalf of the consortium of Aerospatiale and Alenia.

Given that the government thus far has failed to stand up for the Canadian aerospace industry or provide any details whatsoever of the proposed deal, how can Canadians now have any assurance whatsoever that the interest of the workers at de Havilland, our aerospace industry and research and development will take precedence over the interest of a former chief of staff and long time personal friend of the Prime Minister?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): The people of Canada can have trust and confidence that this will bring net benefit to Canada because the previous arrangement brought tremendous net benefit to Canada. They have moved from 2,800 jobs