

Oral Questions

help Sherritt Gordon under the NEED Program to keep the workers in place. It was the provincial Government that said no.

* * *

SUPPLY AND SERVICES**PURCHASE OF WATER BOMBERS—CONTRACT FOR PAINTING PLANES**

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Supply and Services. Can he assure me that the Government's decision to purchase 20 Canadair CL-215 water bombers will result in new jobs at Springer Aerospace near Sault Ste. Marie which has had the subcontract in the past for painting these planes, and is located in a very high unemployment area?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, I am very much aware of the Hon. Member's interest in that particular company and the work that it does. I understand that that company has done very good work indeed for Canadair in the past. Of course I remind the hon. gentleman that in circumstances such as those that he has described, the work will undoubtedly be allotted by Canadair on a competitive basis. However I would strongly urge him to make his representations known to Canadair.

* * *

FISHERIES**RESTRUCTURING OF EAST COAST PROCESSING INDUSTRY**

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, on April 15 the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans was asked if the Government had made a decision on the restructuring of the processing sector of the Atlantic fishing industry. Since that time we have had a budget with no reference in it to the belaboured and financially undercut fishing industry in Atlantic Canada. I would like to ask the Minister of State for Economic Development, who I understand has the responsibility in Cabinet for the restructuring of the Atlantic fishing industry, if a decision has been made. His colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, told us on April 15 that negotiations had reached the delicate stage, and he suggested that we take it up with his colleague, the Minister of State for Economic Development. I now ask him that question.

● (1500)

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows full well, the negotiating team was given a mandate by the cabinet committee charged with the restructuring, and that negotiating mandate is currently being carried out.

PRIVILEGE**MR. STEVENS—REVISED BUDGET TABLES ALLEGED MISLEADING—RULING BY MADAM SPEAKER**

Madam Speaker: Before ruling on the question of privilege raised by the Hon. Member for York-Peel (Mr. Stevens) on April 21, I wish to inform the House of the sequence of events concerning the tabling of the budget documents on April 19 and 21.

Toward the end of his budget speech the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) tabled six printed budget documents which were authenticated as having been tabled by the Clerk Assistant on duty. Very shortly afterwards the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fisher) handed to the Clerk Assistant some additional duplicated material which he said should have been tabled by the Minister with the printed documents. The Clerk Assistant accepted these additional documents but decided that he could not endorse them as having been tabled because they had not been delivered to the Table in accordance with the regular tabling practice. He sent the supplementary material to the Journals Branch together with the documents tabled by the Minister, and made a report to the Clerk of the House as to the action he had taken.

On the following day the Parliamentary Secretary inquired of the Clerk Assistant why he had not endorsed the supplementary material as having been tabled. The Clerk Assistant explained that because of the departure from normal practice he did not feel he was authorized to do so. He suggested to the Parliamentary Secretary that this material could be tabled by the Minister or by the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of the Minister at the following sitting. In the event, the Parliamentary Secretary sought and obtained the unanimous consent of the House to table the additional material at 11 a.m. on April 21.

This leads me to the question of privilege raised by the Hon. Member for York-Peel. In the course of his presentation he alleged that, as a result of changes in the budget documents and the separate tabling of some revised tables, the Minister of Finance misled the House, breached his oath of secrecy and was in contempt of Parliament. The consumption here is that the Minister was in some way dishonest in his manner of furnishing the budget documents.

My predecessors and I have on various occasions ruled that charges of this kind cannot be made by way of a question of privilege but only on a substantive motion making clear and specific accusations. In any case, there is no evidence of what the Hon. Member alleges. It is clear from the report I have had from the Table that the Minister intended to table the supplementary material with the printed documents. The oversight was almost immediately realized and a minute or two later the Parliamentary Secretary handed the supplementary material to the Table. The Clerk Assistant, conscious of the importance of observing the regular practice of the House, did not treat the supplementary material as an integral part of the printed documents. Nothing more serious occurred than