

Oral Questions

If the hon. gentleman will listen to my answer, he will learn as he usually does from my answers. The Manitoba telephone system is a provincial Crown corporation. As a provincial Crown corporation it is not required by the Free Trade Agreement to open any contract to American bidders. Obviously it must have felt that a saving of \$2 million was very significant for its customers. It is responsible to boards of public utilities and the like. It must have felt that it owed it to its customers to accept a lower bid, but it did not have to. It is not bound by the Free Trade Agreement.

IMPACT ON PRINTING INDUSTRY

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): If the Minister knew anything at all about the Free Trade Agreement, he would know that this is just the tip of the iceberg and what we will be facing is a loss of printing jobs across Canada, whether they are public or private companies, because of the ability of the giant printing industry in the United States to take those jobs away.

Why is it that the Department of Industry and Technology stated in its industry profile that the Free Trade Agreement will bring about a major negative impact on the printing industry with the loss of thousands of jobs? Why has the Government neglected to take any action at all to help that industry?

Is it because the Minister and the Government are simply afraid of offending the Americans because of the Free Trade Agreement by offering direct assistance to Canadian industry?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that such an experienced Member of Parliament would not be able to pick up on my original answer and realize the serious error and not even ask a supplementary question.

The point is that provincial Crown corporations are not bound by the Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): They have to meet a tariff, John. The tariff goes down.

Mr. Crosbie: They can either accept the lower bid from the United States bidders, or not accept it at all. It gives our printers and Canadians a great opportunity to secure business in the United States of America.

Don't be small-minded protectionists. Think big. Don't be afraid of competition. It gives us a great opportunity to get into the huge American market. It is 10 times the size of our own market.

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

WORKFORCE REDUCTION AT DE HAVILLAND

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Science and Technology.

In light of the decision this week by Boeing of Seattle to reduce its workforce at the de Havilland plant in my riding by 700 jobs, and the news that de Havilland will not be allowed by Boeing to proceed with its newly designed 400 series of Dash-8s, which is a stretched version of the Dash-8 on the cutting edge of world aerospace technology—

Mr. Valcourt: Why not?

Mr. Kaplan: Well, this is what I want to ask.

Will the Government recognize the mistake it has made in the loose contract with Boeing, and call on the company to attempt to save the 400 version and the 700 jobs?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, when Boeing bought de Havilland from the Government, the Hon. Member predicted that this was going to end up in loss of jobs, and so on.

Mr. Lapierre: That's what is happening.

Mr. Allmand: It's starting.

Mr. Andre: As a matter of fact, even after the 700-staff reduction takes place, there will still be 1,500 more employees working there than when the company was sold.

I would think that the Hon. Member would rise and apologize for the inaccurate predictions that he made in the first instance and congratulate the Government for the wise decision it took.

CONTRACT WITH BOEING—REPORTED CANCELLATION OF 400 SERIES

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Government's sympathy will be great news for the 700 people who are losing their jobs.

Will the President of the Treasury Board tell us what clause of the contract, that he was so proud to negotiate to sell de Havilland to Boeing, is available to protect the 400 series of Dash-8?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, in reacting to the preamble of the Hon. Member I may say that the 1,500 people who are working today as a result of Boeing buying this company are indeed grateful for the decisions taken by the