

**Mr. Schellenberg:** Mr. Speaker, what plans does our Government have to assist remanufacturers?

**Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. My officials are meeting with some of the remanufacturers to deal with this issue. As I have informed the House, in general principle the softwood agreement states that the export tax applies only to the input and not to the added value. In identifying what are remanufactured items, the negotiators worked from lists supplied by the industry. Some of those industry lists did not include all the products. My officials are meeting with the industry to resolve this problem.

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### MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 29

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES—GOVERNMENT ADHERENCE

**Mr. Speaker:** I should bring to the attention of Hon. Members that an application was made this morning by the Hon. Member for Sudbury (Mr. Frith) for an emergency debate. The Chair indicated this morning that this is indeed an important matter and has been the subject of much comment, both publicly and in this Chamber. I am now ready to rule on the application of the Hon. Member who applied under Standing Order 29(1) for an emergency debate.

Before I go any further I wish to say that the Chair looks upon this as an important matter. This is not a frivolous application.

In making his application, the Hon. Member referred, and I quote from his notice, to "the unparalleled circumstances surrounding the departure from the Cabinet of the Hon. Member for Saint-Jean". He went on to refer to "the probity of the Government's dealing with contractors and its adherence to conflict of interest guidelines".

The Standing Order requires that the matter proposed to be discussed must be "specific and important". The Hon. Member's application appears to raise the following as specific issues: first, the circumstances surrounding the departure from the Cabinet of the Hon. Member for Saint-Jean (Mr. Bissonnette); second, the probity, or in other words the integrity, of the Government's dealings with contractors, although that might be assumed, whether the Government was negligent or otherwise in that dealing, and it is broad enough to do so; third, the question of whether the Government adheres to its own conflict of interest guidelines.

In relation to the last issue I think, by clear implication, the application raises the question of whether the Government has adhered to its own conflict of interest guidelines in this particular case, not whether the Hon. Member for Saint-Jean himself adhered to them.

#### S.O. 29

The following is important. In the context of this issue the Chair has serious difficulty with a problem that is more than likely to arise in the course of debate. There is an inevitable risk that the debate could focus upon the conduct of the former Minister. All Members will have noticed during the vigorous questioning which has taken place in Question Period that the Chair has indicated concern owing to the fact that the matter has been forwarded to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for investigation but that as yet no charges of any kind have been made.

Hon. Members will know that there is a long-standing practice in this House to refrain from reflecting on the conduct of a Member, except by way of substantive motion, of which notice is required, drawn in terms which clearly state a charge of wrongdoing. I think it is appropriate for the Chair to say that since Monday, since the comments from the Chair, Hon. Members have taken great pains in framing their questions to avoid impinging on this fundamental precept of justice. I want them to know that this is much appreciated by the Chair.

In determining whether the situation as it exists amounts to a genuine emergency as envisaged by the Standing Order, I must take into account the fact that the following steps have already been taken by the Government. First, the Minister has been removed from office. Second, a police investigation of the matter has been ordered. Third, depending on the outcome of the investigation, the possibility of criminal prosecution has not been ruled out. In fact it has been clearly stated that it is very much something which, depending on the return from the RCMP and its recommendations, will take place. Fourth, and most important, an undertaking has been given that, should the facts contained in the RCMP report warrant further action, then further action will be taken.

In the circumstances the Chair cannot find, despite the importance of this matter, that a genuine emergency exists or that the criterion of "urgency of debate" is met by this application.

I would further point out, as Hon. Members and the public know, that the matter has formed the subject of questions during successive Question Periods this week, and will no doubt continue to do so. No Opposition Days have yet been designated in the current supply period, so that a further opportunity for debating the matter in the near future may well be available.

Therefore I must rule that the Hon. Member's application does not meet the requirements of the Standing Orders. However, I hasten to say, as I said at the outset, the Chair sometimes receives motions pursuant to Standing Order 29 which the Chair, always courteous, hears out. However, occasionally I think it is important for the Chair to state that some of these applications may be more important than others. The Hon. Member for Sudbury has brought a very important matter indeed to this House. However, under the circumstances I think it falls just short of what is required, at least today, in this matter.