

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATE URGENTLY WITH UNITED STATES PRESIDENT

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Considering the previous question, does the Government intend to call Mr. Reagan immediately and tell him that Mr. Niles is wrong about the facts he pointed out to the President?

[English]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could respond to the Hon. Member's question. Ambassador Niles is very clear in his understanding as to what the understanding of the people of Canada is in terms of the effects of the decision taken by the U.S. administration on the shake and shingle industry. Obviously, there are differences in points of view between the understanding of the Americans and the understanding of Canadians. As I said yesterday, we will assess on an ongoing basis the impact of this decision on the people who work in the industry, and make our decisions accordingly.

EXCLUSION OF TERRITORIAL LEADERS FROM TALKS

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister. Is the Minister aware of official protests which have been received from the Leaders of the two territorial Governments, that is, Yukon and Northwest Territories, concerning their exclusion from Monday's talks on the free trade negotiations? Is he aware of this? If so, what has been the Government's response to these protests regarding their exclusion?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any such protests. However, they certainly will be given every consideration, as one would naturally expect from me, should they be received.

MINISTER'S ENCOURAGEMENT OF NORTHERN PARTICIPATION

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane—Superior): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. They have been received by the Prime Minister's Office. I would like to know how the Deputy Prime Minister can reconcile excluding the territorial leaders from these talks when the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development goes out of his way to encourage active participation in all matters which concern the people in the northern part of Canada.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as far as I am aware they will be part of the consultation process. I certainly have not been shy in my representation in this place in years past in ensuring that that kind of process exists. I will certainly do that again in this instance.

UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR'S LETTER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. I am sure he is aware that over 1,000 shake and shingle workers are down at the Blaine border crossing right now making their views known on the action which has been taken against their industry. My question is in relation to Mr. Niles' letter which appeared in all the major Canadian newspapers today in which he states in part:

To put the President's decision in perspective, it is worth noting that the decision was taken almost at the same time that U.S. statistics on bilateral trade for the first quarter of 1986 were released. They show that Canadian exports of goods to the U.S. during the first three months alone of this year were worth—\$17.3 billion.

Since Ambassador Niles has put that on the record, what is the view of the Minister of Finance regarding it being used as the reason for placing the 35 per cent duty on shakes and shingles? Does the Minister not think that will lead Secretary of Commerce Baldrige on Monday to move against softwood—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is long.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have said on a number of occasions in the United States that it is wrong to isolate just the trade figures in the statistics of trade in goods and services between Canada and the United States. Offsetting that we have a major services deficit. The combination of the two puts the picture in a much better perspective, one slightly in favour of Canada but not sufficiently in favour of Canada that would justify any decision along the lines the Hon. Member has just enumerated.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT UNITED STATES PRESIDENT BE CONTACTED

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the Minister of Finance is this. Since the shake and shingle workers and the industry have made it clear that they do not want compensation from either the Cabinet or through some squirrely method through U.S. trade law, will the Minister now agree that the only thing for the Government of Canada to do is to get a hold of President Reagan and make sure that either negotiations are forthcoming or that the 35 per cent duty is removed?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing which has been made clear to the United States Government it is that the Government of Canada is not at all happy with the decisions that were taken last week—

Mr. Fulton: You're not doing anything!

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member says that we are not prepared to do anything. Today, in Halifax, the Secretary of State for External Affairs is meeting with Secretary Shultz. Today, in Washington, officials of the Government of Canada are meeting with representatives of the U.S. administration. We are prepared—