

Oral Questions

and I can assume that, in due course, the Minister will make an appropriate announcement.

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ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**CRIME PREVENTION—DEPARTMENT'S BUDGETARY CUT-BACKS**

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. In the light of two killings following convenience store robberies in Quebec and Alberta, I note that the Minister's Main Estimates will cut the crime prevention budget by more than 50 per cent. Convenience store robbery protection was a main emphasis of the crime prevention program. Does the Minister believe that crime prevention works, as he has said he believes? If so, why is he allowing his budget to be cut by more than 50 per cent in that important area?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Hon. Member that I am well aware of the cuts made to the budget of my Department. After careful review of them, we are quite satisfied that no services such as those mentioned by the Hon. Member will indeed be affected in any way that will endanger the safety of the public.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has been going around the country promoting crime prevention yet his budget has been cut by more than 50 per cent. How can he say that a cut of more than 50 per cent will not make a difference in the effectiveness of the convenience store robbery prevention program?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I have already answered the question. I will repeat the answer if the Hon. Member wishes. I have carefully reviewed the cuts that have been made to this particular Ministry and I can assure the Hon. Member that public safety and that of private citizens will not in any way be endangered.

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TRADE**UNITED STATES DUTY ON CANADIAN SOFTWOOD LUMBER—U.S. PETITION**

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs and is about the 15 per cent countervail on Canadian softwood. Since a termination agreement must be reached prior to December 30 and a prerequisite for that under U.S. law is the withdrawal of the U.S. petition, would the Minister advise if the American petitioners have agreed in any way to withdraw their petition and negotiate an agreement, or is he

counting on the U.S. administration to arrange for that petition to be withdrawn?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my answer to that question must be along the lines of my answer to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry earlier today. There has been a federal-provincial conference in progress over the last two days and there has been a very extensive process of federal-provincial co-operation with regard to the countervail matter. The Prime Minister will be announcing the results of that consultation and that common Canadian action in a few hours Vancouver time.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, as of late last night the head of the U.S. coalition, Bill Lange, knew nothing of this verbal agreement between Mr. Baldrige of the United States and the Minister for International Trade, and the key issue is whether or not they are prepared to withdraw the petition.

• (1140)

My supplementary question for the same Minister results from a statement made on November 5 by the Director of U.S. Trade in the Minister's Department regarding the 15 per cent duty. He said that the subsidy determination is flawed in law and logic, is inconsistent with established U.S. practice, and is based on erroneous assumptions. Is that still the position of the Government of Canada? Do we intend to continue fighting to remedy this tragic situation before the U.S. Department of Commerce and GATT?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate that some Members of the House grow impatient with the federal-provincial process. We are a federal country. There is a provincial interest in this matter. As I said earlier today, the Prime Minister will be making a statement on this matter in Vancouver where the federal-provincial conference is under way.

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PETRO-CANADA**SALE OF COME-BY-CHANCE OIL REFINERY**

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Premier Peckford of Newfoundland stated yesterday that in the sale of the refinery at Come-by-Chance, Petro-Canada placed restrictive market conditions upon the new owners. Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether the statements of Premier Peckford are correct, that there were restrictive market conditions placed upon the new owners?

Hon. Gerald S. Merrithew (Minister of State (Forestry and Mines): Mr. Speaker, the deal that was struck was between