

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order, please. The Hon. Member has a question, I think, now.

**Ms. Copps:** Does the Minister deny the reason the mission was scotched was because he wanted to improve relationships before his trip to the Soviet Union in April, 1985?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I deny that categorically. Let me also say that I have had some experience before with Canadian actions that might bring people from captivity to freedom.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

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**TRADE****LUMBER EXPORTS TO UNITED STATES**

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, a week ago before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, Clayton Yeutter had the following to say about softwood lumber:

A senior-level U.S. delegation is today meeting in Ottawa on this problem. It is imperative that we resolve this issue quickly, and this administration will spare no effort to accomplish that.

Is the Prime Minister today telling this House that there were no proposals made to Canada at that meeting a week ago here in Ottawa?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, there may very well have been discussions back and forth. I assume that is what it was all about. If my hon. friend is asking whether there was a proposal or a suggestion that impacted on any decision in regard to the vote before the U.S. Senate, the answer is no.

**CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS**

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. Earlier in the Question Period the Prime Minister alluded that there might be free trade in lumber. There has been free trade between Canada and the United States for the last 40 years. Would the Prime Minister tell this House and tell Canadians just exactly what further discussions on free trade in lumber will bring about? Freer free trade?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I don't know how funny the people in British Columbia will find that. Unlike the NDP, people know there are Members of the United States Senate determined to cripple British Columbia's forest resource industries and we are opposed to that. That is why we are taking the position that we are on behalf of the British Columbia forest producers.

**Mr. Deans:** What position?

**CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS****LAY-OFFS AT MONCTON SHOPS**

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Last August the Minister assured the Member of Parliament for Moncton that he could not "support any massive reduction in the CN workforce in Moncton". In view of the seriousness of this particular issue to the people of Moncton, is the Minister prepared to live up to that commitment, to order CN to stop all lay-offs at Moncton and to rehire the 250 who are presently on lay-off?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the last information that I have would indicate that some 4,136 people are employed by CN in the Moncton area out of a total of 6,500 people in the whole Atlantic region. That is a pretty good proportion of the workforce of CN to be allocated to one region.

● (1430)

I think the Hon. Member is referring to the shop situation. As he knows, there are three main shops in Canada. There is excess capacity. CN is undertaking to review the excess capacity and to try to make the adjustments commensurate with the workload and the type of work which has to be carried out across the country.

**REQUEST THAT MINISTER ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS TO CN BOARD**

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the Minister of the seriousness of this issue, not only to the people of Moncton but to the whole economy of Atlantic Canada. Will he not use the provisions of Section 99 of the Financial Administration Act to order the board members of CN to prevent all lay-offs at the CN shops in Moncton and to rehire the 250 on lay-off? Is the Minister going to live up to his commitment, or is he going to abdicate his responsibilities as Minister of Transport?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I repeat that there are over 4,000 people employed by CN in the greater Moncton area. I do take this matter very seriously, and that is why there are no precipitous decisions being made. We are trying to work the problem through to provide a long-term future for the people there commensurate with the realities of railroading in our country.

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**TRADE****CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—FISHERMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Is he aware that two American businessmen who appeared on *Canada AM* this morning said