

*Oral Questions*

I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works on their behalf whether he could explain to the people of Nova Scotia, and the people of Halifax in particular, why those shipyard workers are being discriminated against with regard to government policy. While he is on his feet, would he tell us when the Government is going to come clean and deliver on its promises of jobs for the Halifax shipyard workers?

**Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I think the creation of more than 1 million jobs in the last three years is very responsive to a campaign promise.

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

**Mr. McInnes:** That is 1,700 jobs a day in the last three quarters.

I have met with representatives of the Halifax shipyards on five occasions in the last six months. There is obviously a problem, not peculiar to that area, but all across Canada. I and my learned friend, the Minister of State for Finance, met with them today. We indicated that we are going to undertake and deliver a strategy. We are sympathetic to their problem. We delivered the *Louis St. Laurent* only recently. I think they understand that we are working in co-operation with them.

## REQUEST THAT CONTRACT BE AWARDED BEFORE CHRISTMAS

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister who sits in Cabinet and is supposed to represent the interests of the Halifax shipyard workers. Consultation is no substitute for action. There have been delays, delays, and more delays with regard to that facility.

Will the Minister of Public Works give an undertaking today to expedite the process and award the contract for the *Louis St. Laurent* before Christmas? It was supposed to be issued in November, 1987.

If the Minister cannot do that, will he undertake to those unemployed workers that he will put in place immediately, forthwith, an interim Canada Works grant in order to tide them over until the awarding of the *Louis St. Laurent*? Will he be that honourable and provide that commitment?

**Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather ironical that the Hon. Member, who was part of a Government which sat for years and years without developing a comprehensive national shipbuilding policy, now complains. We have an understanding with the representatives of the union. We met with them five times. We will deliver. Hold on.

**Mr. Dingwall:** Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member.

## REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL UNDERTAKING

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Public Works is so convinced and reassured that his colleagues in the Cabinet will support him, will he put his seat on the line and undertake to those workers to deliver to them before Christmas the awarding of the contract for the *Louis St. Laurent*? Does he have the guts to stand in the House and to give that undertaking?

● (1440)

**Mr. Speaker:** The Minister may or may not wish to answer. I think the question is getting very close to being out of order. The Hon. Member for St. John's East.

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## TRADE

## UNITED STATES EMBARGO ON ATLANTIC CANADA FISH PRODUCTS

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. On October 1 the U.S. Government placed an embargo on the import of certain Atlantic fish products. On October 4 the Government of Canada entered into a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States. We learned yesterday, November 25, that the Canadian Government protested the action by diplomatic note. Why did we hear nothing of this from the Government until it was reported in the press? Why did the Government wait until after I raised this in the House to issue a press release informing the people of Canada of this undermining of the agreement that the Government is trying to sell the people of Canada?

**Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister of Transport answered those questions quite fully yesterday. We have been making very strong representations to the United States administration about what we feel is a very unjust attack on our fishing industry. We will continue to do that.

We will use all avenues open to us to ensure that this industry is not attacked unfairly by our neighbours to the south.

## EFFECT OF CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENT

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister for International Trade states in this press release, which was received in my office this morning, that the Government is awaiting a response from the U.S. administration. She also states: "We will do everything in our power to resolve the issue". In my view, issuing a press release seven weeks later and awaiting a response from the U.S. administration does not amount to much pressure.