

Oral Questions

land, and the traumatic shock that has been experienced there?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I am sure it would never cross the hon. member's mind to spread lies. I must tell him that the Government of Canada and my executive assistant on my behalf communicated with Mr. William Marshall last week and suggested to him that we have a joint inquiry. I know, through a third party, that this fact was communicated to the Premier of Newfoundland. The government of Newfoundland had decided to have its own inquiry. We now have a request or a suggestion that it should be joint. The government will examine this very carefully and see what arrangement can be made that will be satisfactory to both governments to ensure that there will be a full investigation and inquiry, and that all facts are brought to the attention of the public. In the meantime, it is very important that the record be set straight.

REASON FOR DELAY IN ANNOUNCEMENT

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, I wish to ask a final supplementary. I spoke today with the Newfoundland minister of energy, Mr. Marshall, who has a solid reputation for honesty and truthfulness. He advised me that at no time has the government of Newfoundland been invited by the Government of Canada to have a joint inquiry. I would put his reputation for truth and veracity above that of anybody else one might care to mention in the Government of Canada. Be that as it may, suppose there has been some mistake about this matter, if the minister has already invited the government of Newfoundland to have a joint inquiry, why can he not say today that there will be a joint inquiry and that the details will be worked out in the next 24 hours? Why can he not do that?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): For a very simple reason, Madam Speaker. A number of conditions seem to have been put by Mr. Marshall in his telex. We have been served ultimatums before by the government of Newfoundland. I want to see what those conditions imply. We will discuss this matter. As far as the reputation of Mr. Marshall or my own is concerned, I will say before the House quite clearly that this government did offer a joint commission.

Mr. Crosbie: Then let's get on with it.

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AVIATION INDUSTRY

FINANCING OF EXPORT SALES

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Last week I pointed out that in Canada we were losing some 3,000 industrial jobs per working day because of lay-offs attributed to a lack of sales in the domestic market and

because of declining export sales. On the weekend de Havilland aircraft, which produces some of the best planes in the world, announced a lay-off of 475 men and women in Toronto because, it said, competing governments in the United Kingdom, Spain and France offer better financing arrangements for sales.

Will the minister agree that the time is overdue in Canada that, when we have a first-class competitive product, the Government of Canada should ensure that our financing for the sales of that product is second to none in any other nation in the world?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, we are working on ways of dealing with this financing situation. We hope to have some decisions to announce before too long. At the same time, there is no question that the sluggish world economy is affecting sales, not just of de Havilland but of all competing companies. A number of other companies in other parts of the world have also announced lay-offs. At the same time I am glad that my hon. friend confirms the quality of the de Havilland product. We are working actively to ensure the success of its sales in Canada and around the world.

• (1425)

REQUEST FOR FINANCING TO RETAIN COMPANIES IN PRODUCTION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, the minister has missed the point. The company specifically noted that other countries were getting the sales. They are not laying off the same numbers. They are beating us, and more specifically they are beating the Government of Canada in intense competition.

I would like to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, since we now have in this first-rate industry in Canada a lay-off of 1,140 jobs by de Havilland of Toronto, and over 900 by Pratt & Whitney in Montreal, would he agree that instead of losing another first-class industry such as we had with AVRO Arrow, it makes immense financial sense in the short run, with high interest rates, either here or elsewhere in the world, that the Canadian government step in with financing to ensure that those jobs remain, so that when interest rates finally come down, here and elsewhere, these first-class competitive firms will remain in existence in Canada, employing the men and women in this country who need jobs?

Mr. Lalonde: What about Candu reactors?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, my recollection of the reason for the lay-offs announced by Pratt & Whitney was not the rationale linked with export financing but the slow sales of airplanes which were built by other companies outside of Canada and which