

● (1450)

## INDUSTRY

### TEXTILES—POSSIBILITY OF REDUCING IMPORTS TO IMPROVE POSITION OF WORKERS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Late last week I met the director of the Manpower Centre in Montmagny who declared that the unemployment rate is now around 20 per cent in the south shore area, following the heavy laying off in the textile industry. Would the minister advise the House whether or not he expects to take very serious measures in the near future to limit the textile imports to 33 per cent of the Canadian demand, in view of protecting our own industry and Canadian jobs?

[English]

**Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** I have given a number of answers in committee on various aspects of the textile problem and I have also replied to questions here in the House on occasion. I believe I advised the hon. member recently that there are two or three different groups working at the present time to see what can be done to meet this problem. At the earliest possible moment, when we have all the information, we shall determine what steps it will be possible for us to take. At the present moment, however, I am not in a position unfortunately, to indicate what form policy may take.

[Translation]

**Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question.

Would the minister indicate to the House whether the import level during the last twelve months went beyond the recommendations of the Textile Board Commission and whether those massive imports are responsible for the present precarious position of the Canadian textile industry?

[English]

**Mr. Jamieson:** Since there are so many varieties of textile involved I would prefer to give the hon. member a written answer setting out the different categories and the levels of imports. My recollection is that there has been an increase in imports from the so-called low cost countries but whether that increase is of any great size or whether it is only marginal I could only determine by looking at the statistics, and I will get those for the hon. member.

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## THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

### REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF JUSTICE THAT STATUTE REMAINS BRITISH STATUTE FOLLOWING PATRIATION

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Was the Minister of Justice stating government policy when he said, according to reports, that after the patriation process,

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which the right hon. gentleman has discussed recently, the British North America Act, which he described as the heart of the Canadian constitution, will remain where it has been since 1867, a statute of the United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster? In other words, it would appear more Canadian, seem more Canadian, but would remain a British statute?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I have not seen the reference and I would want to look at it and speak with the Minister of Justice. I am certain that historically what has been quoted seems correct: if a statute was a statute, it remains a statute of the British Parliament. The essence of the question in this case, and I believe I stated it clearly a couple of weeks ago, is this: patriating the constitution will mean that the British Parliament would declare, now, what it declared for other Commonwealth countries at the time of the Statute of Westminster, to wit, that they would no longer make laws for Canada. That is the essence of what we are trying to obtain.

### POSSIBILITY OF PROCLAMATION OF NEW CONSTITUTION FOLLOWING PATRIATION

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** May I, first of all, tell the Prime Minister that the statement attributed to the Minister of Justice appears in the *Gazette* of March 29. My supplementary is this: has the Prime Minister looked recently at the recommendations of the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee with respect to a process of patriation which would clearly, in the committee's view, involve the proclamation of a new constitution by Canada?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I have not looked at that recently, but this was part of many reports which were studied at the time of the discussion which led to the Victoria Conference. Of course, we realized that once patriation has been obtained a whole series of steps could be taken, some of them involving a new distribution of powers which we would certainly not want to contemplate at this time. Another is a modernization of the language of what was the former BNA Act and the provinces might wish to consider this aspect. The discussion which preceded Victoria did in fact cover a series of such possibilities. I have told the House that I do not want to complicate the present suggested operation by getting into all these matters. Once the constitution is truly Canadian, in the way I have stated, we would obviously wish to look at these various steps.

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## ENERGY

### OIL—DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW PRICE—REQUEST THAT PRICE NOT EXCEED AVERAGE PRICE IN UNITED STATES

**Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. When will the federal government and the provinces complete negotiations and be able to announce a new price for domestic crude oil in Canada?