

*Oral Questions***TRADE**

TEXTILE IMPORT QUOTA—ACTION TO RELIEVE SMALL RETAILERS FROM EFFECT—POSSIBILITY OF MONOPOLIES BUYING QUOTAS

Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State (Small Business). I am wondering whether he would advise the House on measures he is taking to alleviate the plight and concerns of small retailers and importers who have been caught in the 1975 quota guillotine of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will take the time to read the release we issued on the subject last Friday, on which my colleague worked with me, he will be satisfied we are doing our utmost to help the small businesses who started up in 1975. He will realize, too, that yesterday the first question by a member of his party called for more protection for the textile industry in Canada.

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the minister that I have read the release many times. I am wondering whether the minister can advise if the textile quotas are to be permanent, and is he sympathetic to the growth of potential importing monopolies that are being encouraged through the buying up of these quotas?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, this is a very complex problem. Of course, I can see another change in the policy of the opposition in this regard since Monday. My main aim is to protect the textile industry in Canada and I hope to be able to achieve that in a rational manner. If the hon. member has not understood my statement of last Friday I will be pleased to send him a copy in French.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Huntington: Mr. Speaker, I really think these two questions are serious and important. They are not negative in any respect. Would the minister advise whether he is taking steps to prevent such a concentration of importing privileges in the hands of a few in Canada? There are many small businesses and retailers who are affected by this measure. I am sympathetic to the basic move, but are these problems being fixed up?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, in order to cope with this, especially for small businesses, we have decided to have a special allocation for businesses in high quality fashion, for those who started after 1975 and for the hardship cases we have retained 10 per cent of the quota for 1975 to distribute among those suffering the most.

[Mr. Kaplan.]

[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

SIGNING OF NEW AGREEMENT WITH QUEBEC—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Albert Béchard (Bonaventure-Iles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

Could the minister tell whether the people of the Lower St. Lawrence, the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands can expect to enter into a new agreement of economic development as promised for 1976 or the beginning of 1977 or whether they must resign themselves to the resumption of negotiations presumably resulting from the change of government in Quebec on November 15 last?

Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I think that the hon. member and the people of the Lower St. Lawrence can reasonably expect to profit from an agreement on regional development which we hope to be in a position to conclude before the beginning of the next fiscal year.

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[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PAKISTAN—GOVERNMENT VIEW ON SUPPLYING MATERIAL IF NUCLEAR DEVICE DETONATED

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, might I address my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the fact that December 31 is the deadline for negotiating nuclear safeguards with Pakistan, which is believed to be working toward the explosion of a nuclear device, and in view of the fact that Canada has insisted that the explosion of any nuclear device by Pakistan will be followed by a cessation of Canadian supplies, keeping in mind that the deadline is so near, will the government reiterate this determination to cease supplying nuclear materials to Pakistan if a nuclear device is exploded by that country?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I believe I could answer the question with one word, namely, yes, but I should perhaps amplify it by saying the hon. member is quite correct in indicating the deadline, not only in relation to Pakistan but in relation to at least two other customer countries of which I am aware. We are in the process now of last minute, if that is the appropriate term, negotiations in the case of Pakistan, to see if there has been any change in attitude which would indicate their willingness to abide by the proposals we have placed before them. If the current last minute negotiations are not successful then the end result will be as the hon. member has outlined it, namely, there will cease to be any ongoing co-operation between us.