

*Oral Questions*

24992 of *Hansard*, he said this when speaking of the frigate program:

—the responsibility of my Department was to make a very objective evaluation of the proposals from both contractors and then present them to the Cabinet Committee at the appropriate time. I hope to be able to do that in the middle of the month of May—

He has told us outside this Chamber that the bids are still under negotiation with the contractors. Could he explain to us this misleading of the House inadvertent as it might have been?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to tell the Hon. Member that the documents are indeed before the Cabinet and that this whole matter is being looked into very thoroughly. We hope to be able to announce a decision within the timeframe set by the Minister of National Defence and myself.

[*English*]

## TIMING OF DECISION ON CONTRACT

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Madam Speaker, it is rather unusual to hear from one Minister why another Minister has misled the House.

On May 9, as reported at page 25282 of *Hansard*, the Minister of Supply and Services said:

We shall be in a position to announce the name of the company that will be awarded the contract by the end of June.

Does he still hope to meet that deadline? While he is on his feet, will he tell us if he has accepted the Conservative suggestion that the shipbuilding itself should be done in shipyards in different regions of this great country?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services):** Madam Speaker, what the Minister of National Defence and myself have said is consistent and realistic. We indeed hope to have made our decision by the end of June or the beginning of July. I have certainly heard the representations made by the Hon. member for Victoria, NPD Members as well as Members on this side of the House concerning regional distribution. This is one of the issues which must be considered before we make the decision which will be announced, as I have already said, within the timeframe we had determined.

[*English*]

## REQUEST THAT DECISION BE ANNOUNCED IN PARLIAMENT

**Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the same Minister. If I understood him correctly, he said that the decision would be made before the end of June, or certainly in July. Would the Minister give the assurance to the House that the decision will be announced in the House before we adjourn for the summer?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services):** Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member can imagine, there are some uncertainties and I can not give him that assurance. We shall certainly try to give our answer before the summer adjournment.

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[*English*]

## FORESTRY

## REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for forestry. On May 31 and June 7 the committee of this House relating to forestry received some witnesses from the forest industry of New Brunswick. In view of the importance of the representations which they made and the message and information which they carried, would the Minister have the House extend a reference to the committee on forestry to include the study of research requirements, forest management, pest disease and fire control, reforestation, and viable harvest allowances for the forest industry of Canada?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, I did not quite catch the beginning of the Hon. Member's question. I understand that he is asking my views about a special reference to the parliamentary committee for an examination of the forest industry across Canada. If that is the case, I will certainly take his representation seriously and reflect upon it.

## REQUEST FOR EARLY REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

**Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte):** In view of the information which we received indicating that in the little corner of southwestern New Brunswick we have lost ten million cords of wood for harvest, which represents a ten-year supply of wood for the industry in southwestern New Brunswick, it becomes imperative that this reference be made promptly. Another representation was that a forest management policy to replace this wood would take 50 years. Would the Minister reconsider the sort of procrastinating answer which he gave, and in fact authorize this reference between now and the closing of the House so that the committee might get to work and have a report in December or January at the latest, so that we could start to plan forest management early next year?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, it is not really a question of procrastination. I am not sure if the Hon. Member was present, but I think that he knows that the House very recently had an entire day's debate on the forest industry in Canada. Maybe he missed that debate. I am not sure.