

S.O. 21

INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIAN PEOPLE

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, Indian people felt a surge of hope last November when a special committee of this House tabled a report on Indian self-government. The report called for a new relationship between Indian first nations and the federal Government, and for recognition of Indian self-government.

The First Ministers' Conference failed to provide constitutional entrenchment for this right because the Liberal Government, two days before the conference began, did not even know what position it would take. How then could it mobilize public opinion in support of Indian self-government? The promises to bring in framework legislation have also been a hoax. Instead of a new relationship with the federal Government, Indian people are being sucked into a new relationship with the Department of Indian Affairs. As one Indian leader told me last week:

The self-government report is failing our people. The Department is getting more involved in our lives rather than getting out. The Department is trying to tell us what Indian self-government is about.

Indian women have also been betrayed. The Government promised time and again to end Indian Act discrimination against them, but where is the Bill to do this? Why does the Government not bring it forward so that it can be studied and debated? Indian people have heard government promises for so long that they have become part of their heritage, almost like an aboriginal right. When will the Government begin to act? When will it bring in Bills to recognize—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member's time has expired.

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CUSTOMS ACT

PROVISION GOVERNING DISPOSAL OF UNCLAIMED GOODS

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-6, the new Customs Act, is the Government's latest attempt to update a 137-year old piece of legislation that is inadequate and obsolete. Certain of the proposed changes are also inadequate, in particular the one dealing with the disposal of seized or unclaimed goods that have become the property of the Crown. It proposes that disposal by public tender or auction continue to be done according to guidelines established by regulation rather than by legislation. Current regulations prescribe that two senior customs officers shall conduct the public tenders, which the public is not allowed to attend. They also state that any envelopes opened by customs in error shall be resealed and held for the close of bidding.

● (1410)

The potential for abuse is obvious. What safeguards are there to ensure that the officers do not open each submitted bid in error, enabling them to determine the amount that a friend or relative could bid in order to win the tender? What

provision is there to ensure that the highest bid will indeed be chosen by the officers?

One of my constituents was recently denied the opportunity to attend a public tender. He was bidding on an item with a market value of \$45,000. The customs officers had set a minimum reserve bid of \$7,500 on that item. Surely it is not the policy of this deficit-ridden Government to sell off Crown property at fire sale prices! I urge the Minister to address these problems, either through the legislation or in the new regulations now being drafted by his Department.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

INVESTMENT IN AMERICAN MOTORS PLANT AT BRAMPTON, ONT.

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, in January, 1961, American Motors opened up its Canadian production plant in Brampton. On Monday an announcement was made by the President and Chief Operating Officer of American Motors, Mr. José Dedeurwaerder, announcing an investment of three-quarters of a billion dollars in a new American Motors plant in Brampton.

The announcement was made by the President in conjunction with the provincial Government of Ontario and the federal Government, both of which participated in the negotiations and both of which are providing funding on a repayable basis through the payment of royalties over a number of years. I would like to add my congratulations to American Motors and to both levels of government. At the same time, I would like to congratulate Premier Davis on his 25 years of service to the public which began on June 11, 1959.

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TRADE

UNITED STATES ACTION TO RESTRICT STEEL IMPORTS FROM CANADA

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I recently read with interest a statement in the press attributed to high-ranking U.S. officials indicating that they were about to enter into a free trade agreement with Canada in one or more of our key sectors. I understand that it is the intention of the Canadian Government to enter into free trade arrangements with the United States on matters relating to computerization.

On the same day, and in the same newspaper, I read that the United States has moved to restrict the importation of steel from Canada into the United States. The Americans cannot have it both ways. They cannot argue for free trade and draw our Government into a position in which it may sign an agreement which will be detrimental to Canada's best interests, while at the same time argue for restrictive trade practices regarding the importation of basic steel. I would ask the