

Oral Questions

[Translation]

TRADE

UNITED STATES PROTECTIONIST MEASURES—CANADIAN LUMBER INDUSTRY

Mr. Claude Tessier (Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for International Trade. Following his meeting on Monday with the American Trade representative, Mr. Brock, and his previous contacts with the Secretary of Trade, Mr. Baldrige, and the Secretary of State, Mr. Schultz, can the Minister assure the House and Canadian lumbermen that the complaint being reviewed to the effect that Canada practices various forms of dumping which are harmful to the American industry is unfounded and that Canada cannot accept undue American protectionism on or any protectionist measures which would endanger the Canadian lumber industry, an industry vital for our economy and essential for meeting American demand?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, I met with the American Secretary of Trade, Mr. Baldrige, in Washington last Monday to discuss the forest industry and the proposed compensatory charges. It was the third time that I had met Mr. Baldrige to discuss this matter. The provincial ministers, the industry and the Government of Canada have worked together to meet this threat to our industry. I am confident that our position is correct. There are no subsidies on our lumber exports to the United States. We expect the Americans will announce their decision next Monday.

● (1430)

[English]

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, I assume that applause was for the translator!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

CAPE BRETON COAL AGREEMENT—REQUEST FOR TABELING OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Yesterday, by way of a point of order at the end of Question Period, the Minister of Finance gave one more version of what he knew and when he knew it in regard to the "Coalgate" affair. This represents the fifth or sixth time that we have had a change in the story when the previous story would not stand up to examination. Clearly a cover-up is under way.

On Monday I wrote to the Minister requesting that he make public two documents that were not among those he tabled in

the House on February 23, plus all relevant PetroCan documents. Has the Minister asked his departmental officials to check the files of the Scotia Coal Synfuels Project for the January 12, 1981, minutes of the joint management committee? Also, has he had his officials check the July 9, 1981, directive referred to from the Minister to his Deputy which was referred to in a letter by the Deputy on July 14, 1981? Has he asked Petro-Canada for its complete files on this project? In the interest of putting an end to this cover-up, will he table those documents and make them available?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I think I have some technical problems to overcome. In order to table the minutes of January 12, I had to seek the consent of the Premier of Nova Scotia. Apparently he has given his consent, so I will be able to table that.

In terms of the directive of July 9, it was a verbal directive so there is no such document.

In terms of the file of Petro-Canada, some of the correspondence involved private sector partners. In that file there is communication between the Nova Scotia Government and Mr. Gillespie and I have to seek the consent of those two parties before I can table the documents.

I hope that I will be in a position to table everything with the consent of all the parties involved by tomorrow. Of course because some of the documents are commercial in nature, and I have to seek the consent of the Nova Scotia Government and Gillespie and Associates.

Mr. Andre: Madam Speaker, the Minister's contention that that directive of July 9, 1981, referred to in the letter from Mr. Cohen to the former Minister of Energy in the letter of July 14, would not lead one to believe that it is an oral communication. He refers to a directive. It certainly looks as if it is a written communication. I would ask the Minister to have his officials re-examine that situation.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, if we have the final story on the record and the Minister is willing to table all these documents, in the interest of putting an end to the suspicion of cover-up, and in an effort to repair some of the damage that has been done to this institution by the violation of the guidelines and the failure to accept responsibility by the Ministers, will the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources permit a committee of this House to examine this whole question and look at all the available documentation so that there can be no doubt about what is the complete and true story?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of debate in the House about this. I have tabled more documents than ever