

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—LUMBER EXPORTS

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, the wheeling and dealing in Washington continue to go on. My question for the Prime Minister follows up on that of the Leader of the Opposition, but I ask for a more direct and precise answer this time. What secret arrangements have been made which led U.S. Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter to handwrite to Senator Pryor of Arkansas: "Dave, we'll get timber fixed"? What secret assurance is going to cost our lumber producers? Come out with some answers which give us an indication, please.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, none was given, as my hon. friend knows, nor would any be given.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO U.S. SENATORS

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister feels that those kinds of assurances can be ignored, will he tell the House what President Reagan himself meant in his letter to those same Senators when he said: "I remain committed to obtaining resolutions of the lumber and other issues so that American industries will have fair opportunities to compete"?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I suppose he would have to ask President Reagan inasmuch as he wrote the letter. However, I know it will astonish the NDP that we, the Government of Canada, seek to obtain a good deal for Canada in any trading arrangement we enter into. We are satisfied that the longer term interests of the country require that a good deal for Canada also produces benefits for our trading partners. Clearly what President Reagan was trying to say in a civilized manner was that, if lumber is a problem for us, it is also a problem for him, and that within a liberalized trading arrangement he hopes it will be resolved, as do we.

[Translation]

POSSIBLE LUMBER PRODUCTION LOSSES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Could the Prime Minister at least show that he is worried and concerned about all these indications of potential losses for our lumber production?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member would be more successful as a writer for the soaps.

I may point out to him that we have expressed every possible objection and made every possible representation with respect to the lumber problem. This question is progressing quite normally, and we hope that everything will be settled in accordance with reasonable criteria and existing mechanisms. That is as difficult and as controversial as it will get.

[English]

Oral Questions

IMMIGRATION

RUSSIAN ARMY DEFECTORS IN AFGHANISTAN

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It concerns the handling by his Government of the whole issue of the Soviets who we all hope will come to Canada. I should like to ask the Minister very directly why the mission, which had originally been given the green light by his Department, was aborted.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, first of all the Hon. Member should not believe all that she reads, or all that she says.

● (1425)

Mr. Crosbie: Absolutely.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Even the *Whig-Standard*?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Second, just to make it absolutely clear, there has been no relaxation at all of the will of the Government of Canada to bring those six Soviet POWs to freedom and to Canada. There are some very practical problems on the ground that have to do with jurisdictions of other countries, and that have to do with the attitude of the people who are now presumably in control of those six prisoners of war. We believe we may have a way to resolve the problem. I would hope that it will not be jeopardized by irresponsible behaviour in this House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

CANADA-U.S.S.R. RELATIONS

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I don't think it behooves the Secretary of State to be so smug about the fact that it took three journalists—

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Ms. Copps: —if it hadn't been for three journalists from the Kingston *Whig-Standard*, these people would be—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Copps: My question is for the Secretary of State. I want a direct answer. There was a statement made on public television last night that the reason—

Some Hon. Members: Order.