

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can only assume that a distinguished former university professor knows better than that. The facts remain as they have always been, that the Government of Canada can decide what it wants to put on the table and keep on the table, and the Government of the United States decides what it wants to put on the table and keep on the table. Nothing has changed.

SOCIAL POLICY

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): In that case, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister is prepared to talk—so, talk. Let me ask him if in fact he will act right now, unilaterally, and say, “Despite Mr. Murphy’s comments yesterday, we are not prepared at any time, or in any way, to talk about social policy in the course of these free trade talks”.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member thinks that was tough talk, “he ain’t seen nothing yet”.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I do not know what passes for tough talk in the New Democratic Party.

Look, Mr. Speaker, the question of social programs is not an issue in discussion on trade. The question of cultural programs is not an issue in discussions of trade. The question of the Auto Pact is not something we propose to raise or have result in a change in the system that we think is working perfectly well. That, by my calculation, is the one million two hundred and thirty-seventh time I have given that answer in the House of Commons, and I would hope that the New Democratic Party would get in touch quickly, by telephone, with the CLC to get some new questions.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

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● (1440)

CAPE BRETON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

OCCUPATION OF MANAGEMENT OFFICES—CONCERNS OF MINE WORKERS

Mr. Lawrence I. O’Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Can the Minister tell us whether he intends to respond to certain concerns expressed on behalf of miners employed by the Cape Breton Development Corporation?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Acting Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to acknowledge the tremendous work that the Hon. Member has done—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Minister will finish his answer, please.

Mr. Mazankowski:—as well as his support and his advice.

As I indicated yesterday to the House we will be treating this matter very seriously. We have had a number of discussions. I personally discussed the issue with Premier Buchanan of Nova Scotia this morning. We have discussed it with union leaders. We have discussed it with the Chairman of the Board of Devco. Arrangements are now being made to organize a meeting between senior officials of DRIE and representatives of those who are engaged in the sit-in. Hopefully we will be able to resolve the outstanding issues referred to in the protests of the sit-in miners.

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL UNDERTAKING

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Acting Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion for taking such positive action with regard to this most serious situation. However, I ask him in all sincerity whether he can give an undertaking to the House that before the end of June substantive answers will be given to the United Mine Workers of America with regard to the high unemployment at the Cape Breton Development Corporation, as well as the future direction that that corporation will take? Can he give us that undertaking?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Acting Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that I can give the Hon. Member the undertaking with respect to the time-frame. However, I can give him the undertaking that we will sit down and discuss all the outstanding issues to which the miners have referred.

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[Translation]

CROWN CORPORATIONS

CANADAIR—REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF REPORTED SALE

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and concerns the sale of Canadair. When is the Government going to select one of the purchase offers for Canadair? And could the Minister give the House the assurance that, considering the precedent set by de Havilland, a parliamentary committee will examine the sale and have a