

Oral Questions

desire to consult and to find solutions being demonstrated in that room can be repeated in this House, rather than the example we had last Friday of the Opposition carping, with no real serious solutions or suggestions being offered.

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that 117 fishermen had to come to Ottawa to meet with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

I will direct my supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. We have been attempting to get an agreement with the United States on salmon interception on the West Coast since 1971, to no avail. The negotiations are often stalled by very powerful political figures from Alaska, Oregon, and Washington. We have had no leadership from the federal Government in trying to negotiate an agreement acceptable to the people of British Columbia, particularly to the fishermen. Will the Minister insert himself into those negotiations to see that we get an acceptable agreement with the United States to protect our resources and the jobs of Canadian fishermen?

Mr. Brian Tobin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I say to the Hon. Member that I find it more interesting that 117 fishermen had to come to Ottawa before the Opposition even realized there was a problem on the West Coast.

With respect to the problem of negotiations on the West Coast with the United States on a salmon treaty, it needs to be said and repeated in this House that Canada and the United States reached a treaty arrangement in 1983. It was signed. It was believed that, with good faith and good will, that treaty would be ratified. We have not been able to ratify that agreement.

Canada's position was quite simple. It was either to say to the fishermen of British Columbia, as I hear being suggested, that we backtrack on a treaty that we have already signed with the Americans, or we say the cost to Canada of backing up, of giving away more fish, of allowing an Alaskan lobby to dictate to the United States administration, is not acceptable, and walk away from the table until realistic discussions can occur and the rights of our fishermen can be protected. That is the issue.

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[Translation]

INDUSTRY

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH-TECH INDUSTRY—MONTREAL REGION

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Science and Technology.

A report drawn up by the FANTUS company of Chicago showed and confirmed that the Montreal area would have a marked advantage as a development site for high technology

companies as compared with cities like Boston, New York, Los Angeles, and others. However, such benefits related to development and operation costs were lessened by some of the policies of the Quebec Government, such as its craving for independence and Bill 17, which both curtail whatever advantages there may be for these industries.

I therefore ask the Minister of State for Science and Technology whether he has contacted his Quebec counterpart to inform him of the contents of this report and of the dangers that separatism creates for the future of high technology in the Montreal area, which would jeopardize thousands of jobs in Quebec.

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that this report merely confirmed what was already a well known fact, namely that the Montreal area, in fact the whole Province of Quebec, is a most important and attractive location for industries. However, there is a need for political stability. I have not yet talked with my counterpart, but I plan to send him a copy of this report, because as I have already said, it does confirm without any doubt the statements we have made in the past following public studies carried out here and in Quebec.

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[English]

NORTHERN AFFAIRS

COPE LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT—CONTRACT PREFERENCE FOR NATIVE GROUP

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. There have been a couple of agreements on land claims one, with the Council of Yukon Indians, and the agreement commonly referred to as COPE. Some excellent negotiations have gone on and the negotiators are to be congratulated. However, there are two major problems. One is the overlap problem which the Minister discussed last week in the House, and the one that is causing a great deal of concern to a number of groups, including the Council of Yukon Indians, the Old Crow band, the Dene, the Metis, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. That is the clause where a 10 per cent preferential treatment is given to one group within the signatories to the COPE Agreement. The Minister is aware of this. What does he plan to do regarding this clause?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, from a pragmatic point of view the clause may have little application because the CYI have indicated in their agreement that they are not prepared to give preference to the COPE constituents within the area of their agreement. The reciprocity is dead, because COPE then will not give it to the CYI. Therefore, the Yukon people do not