

Oral Questions

about proposals to block off future supply-management agreements for our farmers?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, there is a reason that First Ministers' meetings are held behind closed doors without even a recording secretary. They are supposed to be confidential. The only people present were the First Ministers, the Prime Minister, myself, and for parts of the meeting, Simon Reisman. I can only suggest that the Hon. Member is receiving this material from the NDP Premier of Manitoba. There is no one else who would breach that type of security.

To answer the question of the Hon. Member, I have already stated that the meeting discussed how we can maintain our goal of regional development, which is not on the table, within the framework of a free trade agreement. The meeting discussed agriculture, and the concerns of agriculture. The meeting discussed employment, jobs, economic growth, and the potential for the country. There was general consensus that the manner in which we are proceeding will lead to a good trade deal with the United States. The meeting also concluded, and the Prime Minister is the leading exponent of this, that if it is not a good deal, there will be no deal.

• (1430)

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, if this Government had taken an open, honest approach with the Canadian people right from the start, there would be no need for sleazy accusations.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Argumentative questions lead to argumentative answers. I would ask the Hon. Member to put the question.

INVESTMENT RULES QUERY

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister also admit, contrary to her answer yesterday, that the Prime Minister has now expanded the mandate of these talks to include investment rules with the United States and that the whole picture coming clear to Canadians is one sell-out after another as the talks go on?

Mr. McCurdy: Down the river.

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the only picture becoming clear to Canadians is the fact that the Government's free trade initiative is working and is going to lead to a job creating, economic growth-creating trade treaty with the U.S. at a time of mounting protectionism. I am sorry the Hon. Member cannot understand that.

In terms of his comments about open approaches, the Minister of Agriculture and I just left a meeting this morning with representatives of all the agricultural and food processing industries in Canada in which we discussed at length the measures of our agreement that impact on them. This has been the most extensive consultative system ever seen in the history of the country.

REFUGEES

CHILEAN REFUGEE STATUS CLAIMANTS

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Immigration. I welcome his decision yesterday to allow three Chilean women refugees and their children to come to Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marchi: The Minister will also know that a Montreal delegation of yet unresolved refugee claimants is in Ottawa seeking an audience with the Minister. Given that he was prepared to exercise a sense of compassion in family reunification to the three families yesterday, will the Minister meet with the delegation and assure this House that he will extend that same expression of humanitarianism to the other 85 women and children who are waiting to meet their families in Canada and who are seeking the compassion of this Government?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I explained at length that my decision regarding three women and children who were coming to join their families here in Canada was a very special decision made on compassionate grounds. Today I received a report on the people who are still in Buenos Aires from our officials down there. Each case was very carefully assessed. A representative of the Quebec Government is now in Argentina, and today I can inform the House that none of the cases that were assessed in Argentina could in Canada be considered a refugee case. In the circumstances, if these people wish to apply for admission to Canada, they will have to go through the same channels as everybody else, according to the law of the land. This means they will have to do so with a view to obtaining immigrant status, and their application will have to be considered on the same basis as all other applications of this kind. However, if the representative—

Some Hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Bouchard: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but this is very important. If the representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who has yet to comment on this question, were to recommend that our Government consider a certain number of cases, we would be delighted to do so. Meanwhile, we intend to act according to the laws of this country.

[English]

EFFECT OF REGULATION CHANGE ON PERSONS IN TRANSIT

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, the Minister refused to answer the question as to whether he will today at least give them the time of day. I have a supplementary question for the Minister.