

PENITENTIARIES

CONSTRUCTION OF PRISON IN MAINCLOUAGAIN RIDING

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. The decision to build the prison in his riding is wrong, and he knows it. It cannot be justified. It makes no sense—no economic sense, no moral sense. Does the Prime Minister really expect Canadians to believe that he did not personally interfere in the decision to build the prison in his riding, contrary to all the Canadians who opposed the decision?

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to believe that they do not espouse the position of trying to relieve economic disparity. As far as I know, this was always the position of the former Government. If I may, I should like to quote the Hon. Member for York Centre, the then Solicitor General, when he appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs in May, 1982, as reported in Volume 84 at page 48. In dealing with the siting of the Remous facility, he said:

The site was chosen bearing in mind considerations of regional development, as well as considerations of corrections, but the funding will come from my Ministry. In fact, I think every Department of the Government of Canada ought to take account of regional disparity in dealing with its own priorities.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT CONSTRUCTION BE HALTED

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. The Prime Minister knows that one does not build prisons in order to relieve economic disparities.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nunziata: I should like to direct my supplementary question to the Prime Minister. I would hope that he has the courage to stand up and answer.

Mr. Speaker: Would the Hon. Member put his question, please?

Mr. Nunziata: In view of the fact that the Auditor General is reviewing the decision to build the prison in the Prime Minister's riding, I would ask him whether he is prepared to halt the construction of the prison at Port Cartier, pending the tabling of the report of the Auditor General in the House later this month.

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, as we have already advised, the Port Cartier prison plans are well advanced, and the grounds for advancing them are sound for socio-economic reasons. Again, if I may, I quote from the then Solicitor General when he appeared before the

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same committee on the same date wherein he said: "I think our basic sense of justice"—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think the House would want me to comment. Of course Ministers' responses are essential to the conduct of the business of the country and of the House. However, I would ask that Ministers refrain from giving too lengthy quotes from other sources.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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TRADE

SOFTWOOD LUMBER EXPORTS TO UNITED STATES

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade. Prior to making her final offer, her take it or leave it proposal, did the Minister not do her homework and obtain assurances from the American forest industry that it would be prepared to entertain this offer before actually putting 25,000 jobs at risk and undermining the Canadian case?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I asked the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to do his homework and ensure that U.S. lumber producers were willing to negotiate or to hear an offer, and that is what he did. After I met with him, he met with U.S. lumber producers and had a conversation in which five times they said they wanted to settle.

STATEMENTS MADE BY BRITISH COLUMBIA PREMIER

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. Would the Minister confirm that it was the first public utterances on the need to review stumpage fees of Premier Vander Zalm which led to the undermining of our case and thereby forced other groups to come onside and support the Minister in her eleventh hour attempt to rescue our bid before the Americans?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I realize that there is an ongoing election campaign in British Columbia, but I assure the Hon. Member that he is entirely wrong. Premier Vander Zalm and I have worked together from the very start in discussing the problems of the lumber industry and forestry industry in B.C. Premier Vander Zalm has moved in his own jurisdiction to deal with his own forest industry in a manner which is consistent with that adopted by the other provinces involved and by the Government of Canada.