

We don't accept the envoys' report as the last step toward acid rain abatement on both sides of the border, it is the first step.

CANADIAN POSITION

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, it is not only a first step, it is an inadequate step. I want the Minister of the Environment to reaffirm the Canadian position, and in doing so to say just how much a failure the envoy process has been. The ball is now back in the Prime Minister's court, and what is he going to be saying to Mr. Reagan when the next summit comes along?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada and myself, in particular, accept acid rain as the number one environmental priority of the Government and of the country. The Hon. Member says that the envoys' process and report have been a total and utter failure. I disagree. In fact *The Washington Post*, which is viewed universally as a progressive newspaper, says:

In past years the administration has stoutly resisted spending large sums on acid rain, on grounds that more research was needed. This (the envoys' report) would take it past that point, and in the least convenient of budget years.

The Washington Post has endorsed the envoys' report. I think the Hon. Member should have at least as much confidence in it.

Mr. Broadbent: Why didn't you quote the *New York Times*? It didn't say the same thing, that is why.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

HALIFAX NAVAL DOCKYARD

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Defence concerning Canadian Forces Base Halifax. Media reports claim there is a government proposal to privatize the naval dockyard at CFB Halifax. Will the Minister advise the House whether there is, in existence, a plan to privatize the naval dockyard in Halifax?

I am sure he knows that thousands of Nova Scotians depend on the dockyard for their employment, and I think they have a right to know whether or not there is such a plan.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Associate Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I have been unable to determine the source of that story. There is no such plan within the Department of National Defence and I am informed that the task force review, the ministerial review of programs, has not considered this at all either. So just where that story originated from, I have no idea, but it has no basis in fact.

Oral Questions

CROWN CORPORATIONS

SALE OF DE HAVILLAND—COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): My question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Earlier in the Question Period the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion said he welcomed the committee's proposed study of de Havilland, which was meant to begin today and has now been postponed. I want to ask the Acting Prime Minister for his assurances that the Government will not be putting pressure on the members of the committee about those hearings, and that the committee members will be free to decide what issues about de Havilland and Boeing and their futures to examine, which witnesses to call, and, in general, how to conduct its work.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): I am trying to be charitable, this being the first day coming back after the new year but I do not know how many times we have to say something for that hon. gentleman to understand it.

The President of the Treasury Board has been saying over and over again that the appropriate committee examination will be afforded to this transaction.

The Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and I have repeatedly been saying the same thing. The annual report of CIDC is before the committee. If the committee wants to examine it, the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion has already volunteered to appear so the committee can start with him. Let them set their agenda and get about their work. We don't operate in this Government like that Party.

● (1150)

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the President of the Treasury Board and concerns exactly that openness. In the last Question Period of last year the Minister told me that all I had to do was phone and I would receive the information with respect to what commissions were being paid on that sale. I phoned and I did not receive the information. I have asked questions under access to information legislation and I have not received answers. I have written to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the hon. gentleman have a supplementary question?

Mr. Kaplan: Given the short time which the committee is being given, will the Government give us this information now—today—so that we can prepare ourselves in order to make those committee hearings as useful as possible? The Government has already welched on its commitments in the past.

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could help the Hon. Member for York Centre—

Mr. Crosbie: He is beyond help!