

## Oral Questions

Are we to interpret Ottawa's failure to act on the issue of a ferry for the islands as a wish to finish the job started in the 1980s and to deliberately bring about the closing of the last great shipyard in Quebec?

[English]

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear from the Bloc Quebecois just exactly what plans the shareholder of MIL Davie has for its shipyards. I can tell him that I have been working both with Mr. Véronneau, president of MIL Davie, as well as with the previous government to find a solution to the problems confronting MIL Davie.

They will not be solved, as I said to the previous questioner, by simply finding one contract to give on one day. If that were the solution for this company's problems they would have been solved long ago because there has been a series of contracts awarded to that company.

The challenge for MIL Davie, as with much of the rest of the Canadian manufacturing sector, is to become competitive in a world in which manufacturing, particularly of ships, is global. The Canadian domestic market is not large enough to support a shipyard by itself and therefore they must be competitive.

• (1430)

If we can address that challenge we will succeed both at MIL Davie and elsewhere. That is the fundamental challenge and it will not be simply solved by awarding a single contract.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. If we follow the minister's logic, he has just announced the closure of MIL Davie. My supplementary question is for the Minister of Transport. Are we to understand that the Minister of Transport has recently decided to transfer the question of the ferry to his colleague, the Minister of Industry, in an attempt to cover up his strategy of closing MIL Davie to the benefit of St. John Shipbuilding in his province?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been trying for several months now to explain to the opposition members that the situation regarding the ferry between the Magdalen Islands and Prince Edward Island must be worked out between Transport Canada and the operator of the service, who receives an annual subsidy to provide ferry services to those wishing to use them.

As far as MIL Davie and the construction of a ship is concerned, this is related to industry, to the creation of jobs in Quebec. The difference between the two issues is easily understood. I hope that with time, possibly in a year or two, the distinction will become clear to my hon. colleagues from the Bloc.

[English]

## IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of immigration promised that he would decide what to do with his friend Mr. Schelew no later than yesterday. Yesterday passed and no action was taken apart from the release of the names of the accusers to Mr. Schelew.

This minister has known about the situation since September. Has the minister delayed taking action for so long in order to give Schelew an opportunity to persuade board members to drop their complaints?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the short answer is absolutely not.

I requested the deputy chair to respond to the chair's report. I received that response in my office late Thursday. I read the response only late Friday night.

I made no such promises that any decision would be made by Monday. I have the report of the chair and an extensive response to that report. I am reflecting and taking advice carefully and will be making a decision by the end of the week.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the confidential report made against Schelew chronicles months of intimidation and veiled threats, references to a friendship between the minister and Schelew, Schelew telling members to ignore lies that refugee claimants tell because "everybody lies".

This minister has let Tory appointees like Greg Fyffe go from the board for no reason at all. Why has he chosen to protect Schelew at the expense of individual board members and the integrity of the entire refugee process?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, rather than addressing the facts of the matter this member prefers to politically exploit this situation.

I say to the member once again that I asked for the review by the chair and she has given me her report. I have asked through a lawyer of justice for the deputy chair to respond to the recommendation and the appropriateness.

I have been seized of both those documents. I am reflecting on the evidence contained in both and then we will make a decision. It is as simple as that. I am sorry to disappoint the member but it is very simple, very straightforward and no one is hiding anything.