

Oral Questions

Why does the Hon. Member not go back and read the Air Canada Act of 1977? The Air Canada Act of 1977 said that it must perform and operate as a commercial company in anticipation of profit. That is a pretty clear mandate for the corporation.

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FISHERIES

CANADA-FRANCE DISPUTE—BOARDING OF FRENCH TRAWLER

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. He will know that at this moment Canadian fisheries officials are boarding the French trawler off the coast of Newfoundland. This obviously is a most serious international provocation on behalf of the French. The French officials on board the craft have indicated they plan to resist any efforts at arrest. Considering that the Minister's officials are now boarding this particular craft, and our officials and our ship are armed, what does the Minister plan to do from this point on?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member points out, this is a very serious matter indeed. We have had the St. Pierre and Miquelon based trawler *Croix de Lorraine* under surveillance for several hours while it has been sailing within the undisputed waters of Canada. We now have sufficient reason to believe that an infraction of Canadian law has been committed. For that reason we are commencing normal activities, as the Hon. Member has implied, according to standard operating procedures. When further information is available on the progress of this exercise, I will have more to say.

MINISTER'S PLANS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a serious international provocation on behalf of the French. French politicians are on board the craft. Television crews are on board the craft. It is obvious they plan to make this a serious incident.

Mr. Mazankowski: Is that where Broadbent is?

Mr. Riis: It is not a joking matter, Mr. Speaker. It is a very serious international incident. The people of Canada would like to know precisely what the Minister's plans are. Does he plan to arrest the fishermen? Does he plan to arrest the people aboard this craft?

Mr. Shields: If the cameras are there, Broadbent will be there.

● (1440)

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member has recognized, this is not a

matter to be laughed at. It is indeed a very serious matter. It is also a matter on which we should not speculate or hypothecate here in the House of Commons.

Our two coastal patrol vessels, the *Leonard J. Cowley* and the *Cape Roger*, have engaged in an enforcement action according to standard operating procedures. When that action is completed, I will have something further to report.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Mr. Speaker: I wish to bring to Hon. Members' attention the presence in the gallery of Lord Carlisle of Bucklow, Member of the House of Lords and Chairman of the British Parole System Review Committee.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Speaker: I wish also to draw to Hon. Members' attention the presence in the gallery of the members of the General Affairs Committee of the Western European Union, led by Dr. Karl Ahrens.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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TRADE

UNITED STATES OMNIBUS TRADE BILL

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a further set of questions to the Minister for International Trade in relation to the agreement between the two Houses of Congress to proceed now with the Trade Bill that contains many measures which are clearly detrimental to Canadian economic interests.

On March 6 the ambassador of Canada in Washington outlined a series of objections and concerns about that legislation. A reading of the document shows that most of those concerns have not been answered and that the measures to which the ambassador took exception are still contained in the agreement that is now going forward as part of the omnibus Trade Bill.

Taking that into account, I want to ask the Minister why it is he said in the House, in response to the Leader of the Opposition, that he considers the new Bill to be a major improvement and that it has many improvements in it. Does the Minister still stand by the position taken by Ambassador Gotlieb that the measures contained in the omnibus Trade Bill