

Oral Questions

he brought in a bill creating a Crown corporation for the purpose of eliminating political interference. That was the position of the Liberal Party. We think it was a wise decision. In fact, it was a decision adopted unanimously by the House.

The hon. member is asking me to be in contempt of the House and I will not do that.

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TRADE

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

Previous news reports indicated that once the minister had a consensus among all of the provinces he would be approaching the U.S. administration to start renegotiating the softwood lumber tariff memorandum of understanding.

• (1440)

Can the minister tell this House if he has the required consensus, especially from the Atlantic provinces, to tell the U.S. that Canada wants out of the MOU?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, a simple answer to the question is no, we do not have that consensus.

I have indicated to the U.S. trade representative, Ambassador Hills, that we have some major concerns with the MOU and that when we meet later on this month at the first meeting I have of the trade commission between the United States and Canada, I propose to raise this matter, but at this point we do not have a consensus as suggested by the hon. member.

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister's answer indicates the deep trouble that this government has got this country into when it signed away our sovereignty in forestry with the MOU.

My question to the minister is this. Will the minister tell Carla Hills and the gang that could not trade straight

that this government rejects the MOU and will give the 30 days' notice and get Canada out of the MOU?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I will take the hon. member's suggestion as a representation, but as he knows this is a very complex issue. He asked a question concerning the Atlantic provinces. Atlantic Canada is not subject to the export charge and I think that for him to be honest with Canadian people he should understand that their position on the MOU is quite different from other provinces.

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EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Alan Redway (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs I will direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister.

Unemployment in the greater Toronto area is now almost 10 per cent. That is over twice what it was last year at this time. A great many of those jobs could have been saved if we had had a U.S. style Chapter 11 bankruptcy law in place.

I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister this. How many more jobs are we going to have to lose and how many more businesses are going to go down the tube before we get modern bankruptcy legislation in this country, bearing in mind that it was promised some two years ago in the 1989 Speech from the Throne?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely right. The Bankruptcy Act of Canada is in desperate need of being overhauled. Bills have been brought before Parliament I think some six times in the last 25 years in an attempt to do that and we are going to have one more try.

My colleague, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, will be bringing forward that legislation in the next few days. I think the hon. member will find that it goes a long way toward addressing the kinds of situations that are addressed in the United States Chapter 11.