

*Oral Questions***DISARMAMENT**

STATEMENT MADE BY PRIME MINISTER

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Since both the Minister of National Defence and the Secretary of State for External Affairs have come out, not once but several times, against a nuclear freeze—mutual and verifiable—was the Prime Minister speaking only for himself as a private citizen when he advocated this most important step last week?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I was stating a policy which I believe to be that of the Government of Canada. I am not clear as to where my policy differed in any way from that expressed by any of my ministers.

Miss Jewett: The Prime Minister has not then read the speeches of his colleagues. They have both been opposed to a nuclear freeze.

QUERY RESPECTING DEFENCE INDUSTRY PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAM

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, may I ask my supplementary of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce to see whether he is in line with the Prime Minister's thinking. If it is the government's policy to oppose further development of nuclear weapons, I would ask him why officials from the Defence Industry Productivity Program were meeting in Ottawa late last week with officials from Boeing? Why were officials from a program in his department, the Defence Industry Productivity Program, meeting with officials from the Boeing Winnipeg branch late last week to discuss federal assistance to Boeing on a potential contract for the creation of components of the MX missile? Why is the government furthering the production of new nuclear weapons like the MX missile?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I apologize to the hon. member, but it is apparent from her question that she must have misinterpreted my position and therefore, if she will allow me, I will supplement my former answer before she asks her supplementary question.

I may be disappointing the hon. member, but I did not advocate a freeze in the sense which I believe it is understood by the hon. member. I did advocate the policy of suffocation, which is a freeze, but that policy was always advocated in a bilateral context so that both sides should be proceeding along those lines. I would point out to the hon. member that that policy was, unfortunately, not accepted by either side. That is why this government is now on the two-track policy which we reaffirmed in NATO just a few days ago.

FINANCE

POSITION OF MINISTER

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister knows that the Minister of Finance has brought down two budgets during his tenure. The first one literally drove billions of dollars out of the country by the establishment of the National Energy Program, and the second one was the worst anti-investment budget in this country's history.

In light of the crisis of confidence, not only in the policy of the minister but in the minister himself, and in light of his dismal track record, does the Prime Minister still have confidence in the economic ability of the Minister of Finance to bring down an economic statement?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I do not believe that that question is any more in order than if I were to ask the hon. member if he had confidence in his leader. In this case I can give the hon. member a clear assurance that I do have confidence in the economic abilities of the Minister of Finance.

Miss MacDonald: You are the only one.

Mr. Speyer: The Prime Minister may have that confidence but no other Canadian has it.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance. There are 250 small businesses going broke every day. More than 1,000 Canadians each day are going out of work as a direct result of the economic policies of this government. Will the minister give us an assurance, without stating exactly what the policy is, that something will be done for the small business community when he brings down his economic statement later this month?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, of course I find the comments of the hon. member really quite unjustified and almost nonsensical when he attributes the current economic situation in Canada to—

Miss MacDonald: To you.

Mr. Clark: To the Government of Canada.

Mr. MacEachen: —to the policies of the Government of Canada.

Mr. Clark: It is all the fault of Zaire.

Mr. MacEachen: That is just an over simplistic approach that has been perpetuated by his leader and other members of