

Questions on the Order Paper

point out that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) promised in the course of the bilateral trade negotiations that Canadian sovereignty would not be compromised.

They also state that the trade agreement negotiated by the Government threatens the very fabric of Canadian political and economic sovereignty by removing the power of the Canadian Government to effectively control foreign ownership to develop Canadian energy resources in the best interests of Canadians or to equalize opportunities between the regions.

In light of all that, the petitioners call upon Parliament to dissolve and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the—

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think there was some discussion last week about the Standing Orders in relation to petitions. There was a fairly clear statement from the Chair that petitions are not to be read. I would bring that to the attention of my hon. friend.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. We have had this debate before. We agree that even though we may not read entirely a petition, Canadians who are listening would like to know what we are talking about when we table a petition. It would be too easy, Your Honour, to say, "A few people in Canada have asked me to put forward this petition concerning one problem. Thank you". I do not think that is the intent of a petition.

I may be tempted to agree with the Hon. Member that to read all of a petition is not necessary. If Your Honour consults the record he will see that to go along with what the Hon. Member is suggesting is to agree that it would be foolish to have any petition presented in the House.

I do not have any petitions to present today. However, I would not do honour or show respect for the people who give me petitions to be put to the House if I do not say in the House what they are all about. Perhaps some Members exaggerate by reading a whole petition. If we wanted to just table a petition then we could do that with the office of the Clerk.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I know that we have had this debate before. I want to point out that I named the communities of the individuals who signed the petition. Since people at home are listening and want to be sure that what they have signed is in fact what I am tabling in the House, then it would be remiss of me not to do what I have done. That is why I picked two or three paragraphs from the petition. In this way the folks who have gone to the trouble of signing the petition know exactly that what they have signed is what I have tabled in the House and that I did not make up something else when I got to my feet.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) who has a proven reputation here for expressing vigilantly the views of his constituents and others who have sought his services would want the public and the people who signed the petition and all Members of the House to know

what is the subject matter. The Parliamentary Secretary raises a legitimate point of order in that a petition itself ought not to be read. I am cognizant of the remarks of the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) who is often of great help to the Chair. There has to be some balance in this matter and the Chair tries to achieve that.

However, if the statement that goes with a petition goes on overly long or is thought to be going on overly long then naturally someone will rise and raise a point of order. I think that the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt has made it clear to his constituents that indeed he has presented his petition today.

I should also point out for the information of all Hon. Members and for the public that petitions are not necessarily always spoken to. Many petitions are just filed with the Table, which is a proper recourse under the rules.

It is understandable why Hon. Members would want to stand and put on the record the fact that they have indeed presented petitions on behalf of those who signed them.

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[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, question No. 235 will be answered today.

[Text]

CANADA LANDS COMPANY (MIRABEL) LTD.

Question No. 235—**Mr. Boudria:**

During the fiscal years ended March 31 (a) 1985 (b) 1986 (c) 1987 did the Canada Lands Company (Mirabel) Ltd. make any expenditure on foreign travel and, if so, for each period, in what amounts and, for each trip, what were the (i) names of the participants (ii) purpose (iii) cost?

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): In so far as Public Works Canada is concerned:

(a) 1985—none. (i) none, (ii) none, (iii) none.

(b) 1986—Togo. (i) Mr. Richard Bergeron, Director, Finance and Administration (CLCML). (ii) At the invitation of Québec's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and of the *Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec*, the Corporation was asked to send a participant to help develop a market in Togo. For businesses in the Mirabel region, this trip resulted in orders for farming equipment, tractors and a sales contract of mineral water export, the largest to date in Canada, i.e., 1,500,000 1.5-litre bottles from Nora Company. (iii) \$7,000.

(c) 1987—Israel. (i) Mr. Pierre Hardy, President and Chief Executive Officer (CLCML), Mr. Roger Gosselin, Director of