

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the House that the multilateral trade negotiations respecting the Swiss formula of a 40 per cent cut represents merely a weighted average. In some instances one might grant a higher percentage, and in others a lower percentage. If one looks at the manufacturing sector paper which my department put out, one can see the four or five specific industries in which imports have made the greatest inroad into our domestic production. Textiles is one of those industries. It would be logical to assume that our negotiators would argue strongly for a much lower reduction than the Swiss weighted average formula of 40 per cent.

Mr. Stevens: Where does the logic come in?

Mr. Horner: With regard to the textile industry, investment, which is not large, in Canada is up something like 23.6 per cent this year.

[Translation]

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question.

Considering the importance of the matter and the fact that there is a Textile and Clothing Board which is specifically there to advise regularly the minister about the conditions, has the board asked the government not to reduce tariffs on imports, especially on textiles?

[English]

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the Textile and Clothing Board has kept me informed of their wishes and of the progress in the industry. I would inform the hon. member that I intend to table a report on motions this afternoon with regard to textiles and handbags.

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● (1432)

ENERGY**AECL ENFORCEMENT OF EISENBERG CONTRACT**

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources: it arises out of the disturbing remarks yesterday of the chairman of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited. I am sure the minister is well aware of them. Since the chairman of AECL states that he does not know whether Mr. Shaul Eisenberg will perform his agent's services—which is a different opinion from the one he expressed before the public accounts committee last November 17, when he said, "I fully expect the services to be rendered over the six or seven-year period"—and since the minister gave his personal authorization to the renegotiation of this contract by Mr. Campbell, what steps has the minister taken to ensure contract compliance? Also, has he asked Mr. Campbell for an explanation as to why AECL, in particular, would not attempt to enforce such a contract?

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I think the chairman made it quite clear that AECL is going to insist upon enforcement of the contract because it is not satisfied with invoices that were submitted to it nearly two years ago with regard to post-contract services. The corporation rejected, and did not pay, that invoice; nor has it received any other invoice. I can only assume that the agent has received the message that he will have to provide much better accountability for these invoices in future.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): In light of the contradiction between the minister's statements today and Mr. Campbell's statement yesterday, is Mr. Campbell going to introduce another statement today contradicting his statement of yesterday but agreeing with the statement of November 17? Will the minister indicate why he approved the kind of open-ended financial commitment that was made in the renegotiated contract—a financial commitment that has cost the taxpayers of this country well over \$15 million already? Can he offer any assurance that services are being performed by Mr. Eisenberg, in light of the fact that the one document that has been submitted was rejected by AECL? What can he give by way of assurance that any aspect of service is being performed by Mr. Eisenberg in spite of the further payment of \$2 million that has been made?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, the chairman made it clear yesterday that he is seeking an undertaking from the agent on that point.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): It is obvious that the minister is in no position to answer. It is incredible that the situation has been allowed to drag on for so long. In addition to the more than \$15 million that has already been paid to Mr. Eisenberg—for which, according to the Auditor General, and now the public accounts committee, no satisfactory accounting has been made—is the minister still going to permit a further payment of more than \$3 million as agreed to by himself and Mr. Campbell without any adequate means of ensuring contract compliance? Are we going to see further expenditure of public funds simply frittered away on this very bad agreement made by the minister and Mr. Campbell?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is flogging an issue here in which he took no interest before. He was not a member of the committee. He has suddenly surfaced as a person who is interested in a subject which engaged the attention of many other members during this period. I suspect that if he had looked at the issues, I would not have to remind him once again that no payment has been made on the post-services contract. I do not know how many times I will have to repeat that for his benefit. If he likes, I will repeat it once more: the post-services contract could be as much as \$5 million. No payment was made; the invoice was rejected.