

Statements by Ministers

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—STATEMENT BY
PRIME MINISTER

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform the House and the country that I have today spoken to the President of the United States to express Canada's interests in pursuing a new trade agreement between our two countries.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: We hope that this action will lead to negotiations for a new trade agreement between the United States and Canada. I have asked the President to explore with Congress their interest in pursuing these negotiations. Both sides recognize that the issues are complex. Both sides are determined to see the process moved as expeditiously as possible. The President and I will be meeting in the spring of 1986 to review progress and the prospects for a new agreement.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Members will recall that at Quebec City six months ago, President Reagan and I made a declaration on trade in goods and services. We pledged to explore all possible ways to reduce and eliminate existing barriers in our bilateral trade. We instructed the Minister of International Trade (Mr. Kelleher) and the President's Trade Representative to report on how trade could be enhanced between our two countries. Today I will table the Minister's report to me on this vitally important subject. Of course, we will make it public, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Throughout our history trade has been critical to Canada's livelihood. Now, almost one-third of what we produce is exported. Few countries in the world are so dependent upon trade. Trade simply means jobs. Yet, our share of world trade has been declining. This trend ultimately threatens the jobs of many Canadians and the living standards of the nation as a whole. We must confront this threat. We must, as a nation, reverse this trend. To do so we need a better, a fairer, and more predictable trade relationship with the United States. At stake are more than two million jobs which depend directly on Canadian access to the U.S. market.

Five decades ago the world was in the midst of the great depression. Restrictive trade policies made things worse. Canada and the U.S. were the first to respond to the strong protectionist pressures of the time. They began the process of tearing down these obstacles to growth. Canada and the United States indeed concluded a bilateral trade agreement in 1935. More countries joined them in 1938. The principles underlying the Canadian-American bilateral agreement formed the foundation of the post-war multilateral trading system.

want to deal as well with the Bills relating to the Toronto Harbour Commission, to the Canada Shipping Act, and to amendments to the Criminal Code concerning pari mutuels.

As always, in order to accommodate the Opposition and all Members of the House, I will arrange the business in the presence of a spokesperson from the Opposition who can make whatever contribution is deemed appropriate.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering whether the Government House Leader (Mr. Hnatyshyn) might be able to tell us whether he has scheduled, for the next few days, any further discussions with regard to the reference to committee of the matter of the Canada Commercial Bank and the Northland Bank?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Hon. Member raised that issue because I do not want him to have any misunderstanding about the setting forward of this particular motion. It is my intention to continue discussions. I am sorry that I was not present last Monday. We had agreed that the matter would go forward last Tuesday. I do not want the Hon. House Leader to have any misunderstanding with respect to the order of business. I will get together with the House Leaders at a mutually agreeable time to discuss these matters. I am sure that we can make progress.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PRESENTATION OF FIFTH REPORT OF STRIKING COMMITTEE

Mr. Chuck Cook (North Vancouver-Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Striking Committee.

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TRADE

TABLING OF REPORT OF HON. JAMES KELLEHER TO PRIME
MINISTER OF CANADA

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 47(2) I have the honour to lay upon the table copies, in both official languages, of a document entitled *Report by the Hon. James Kelleher, P.C., M.P. to the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada.*