

LETTER ALLEGEDLY SENT FROM MINISTER'S OFFICE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, if this is an economic opportunity, why did Mr. David Wegenast of the Minister's office send a letter to Mr. Robert Van Eyk, President of Mother Snow's, telling him the licence had been approved, thanks to the intervention of the Member for Cumberland-Colchester and the Member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the facts presented by the Hon. Member are untrue.

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TRADE

WATER RESOURCES—POSITION OF CANADIAN NEGOTIATOR

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs. The Minister made it clear in the House some time ago that the export of Canadian water was not a subject of the free trade negotiations. It is clear that Mr. Reisman has been musing about his favourite subject again. Will he tell Mr. Reisman to either shut up about water exports or resign?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, to repeat to the New Democratic Party what I have said to their representative in the Liberal Party—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): —I am advised by Mr. Reisman's office that no statement on that matter has been issued by Mr. Reisman since his appointment as chief negotiator. I and the Minister of the Environment, and others, have made it very clear that we regard the water question as separate from the possibility of negotiations on trade matters with the United States.

GRAND CANAL PROJECT

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. Could he indicate whether he has given up his early enthusiasm for the Grand Canal project and, if so, could he tell the House why we keep paying Mr. Reisman a thousand dollars a day to talk about something which the Government says should not be discussed any more?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is reaching back to statements that were made by Members in the House or persons in the Public Service before they assumed their present responsibilities. I remember, to my great regret, when he used to be a Progressive Conservative.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Saint-Léonard-Anjou.

Mr. Blaikie: Privilege, Mr. Speaker. I have been slandered.

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[Translation]

INSURANCE

DIFFICULTIES FACED BY SMALL BUSINESSES IN SECURING LIABILITY COVERAGE

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Small Businesses.

Most small businesses are now—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the House will let the Hon. Member have his question heard.

[Translation]

Mr. Gagliano: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Most small businesses are in a crisis situation due to a lack of liability insurance.

The Minister of State for Small Businesses has not made a single announcement or statement to the effect that he is going to help small businesses. I am now giving you a chance to explain your position.

Are you going to help small businesses?

Hon. André Bissonnette (Minister of State (Small Businesses)): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to answer questions I do not often get from my hon. colleague.

Yesterday and the day before, the Minister of State for Finance answered your questions. She gave clear answers and we discussed them together. And the answers she gave you were entirely to the point.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard-Anjou): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister does not have an answer, I will direct my question to the Minister of State for Finance.

[English]

You said in the House on Monday that there is no guarantee for insurance. Will you explain to the House how you could pay over a billion dollars to uninsured depositors in the bank fiasco when you cannot ensure insurance for small business?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, as usual the Hon. Member has his facts wrong. I said that life has no guarantees.