

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: No.

An hon. Member: Did the Prime Minister say no?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

REQUEST FOR REINSTATEMENT OF TRAINING PROGRAM—
MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 on a motion of urgent and pressing necessity. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development last week eliminated the entire budget of the Indian guidance councillor training program administered by the Federated Saskatchewan Indian College. This valuable program until last week employed 90 native councillors who were active at the reserve level counselling persons with alcohol, youth and family problems. The entire budget was eliminated with only two days' notice. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow):

That this House instruct the government to immediately reinstate this valuable and necessary program for the Indian people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker: The presentation of such a motion for discussion at this time, pursuant to Standing Order 43, would require unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before beginning the oral question period, I should like to say that I fervently hope, once again, that we will return to the great discipline which governed us until a few days ago, requiring short questions and short answers.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

TRADE

UNCERTAINTY REGARDING GATT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the President of Privy Council in his capacity as the minister responsible for GATT negotiations. I am sure the minister needs no reminding of the concern that exists in the country about the secrecy and uncertainty regarding GATT negotiations. That has been added to by statements in briefing notes that were made available as a result of some

[Mr. Speaker.]

of the sectoral consultations. One of those notes with regard to the textile industry reads:

The indicated policy for this sector—

That is, the textile industry.

—is the gradual reduction of the work force in the industry behind temporary measures of protection.

Is it, in fact, the instruction of the Government of Canada to its negotiators at GATT in Geneva that our long-range policy should be to lose more jobs for Canadians now employed or looking for employment in the textile industry?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): No, Mr. Speaker.

● (1417)

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, since the minister has now denied the statement which was made in one of his documents, let me ask him about the veracity of another statement put forward in the briefing document by the Government of Canada in relation to the position taken by this government at GATT.

In relation to the shipbuilding industry, the same document reads as follows:

Here again, the indicated policy is to seek increased consolidation and specialization which would have the effect of progressively shrinking the employment base and the amount of subsidization required.

That means cutting down the jobs available to Canadians in the shipbuilding industry and the strength of the shipbuilding industry. Is the government's document an accurate statement of the position the Government of Canada is taking in the GATT negotiations?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I wish to repeat what I said yesterday, namely, that the period of hard decision-making will arise probably late in May or early June. Up to that time it will be impossible to be certain about the outcome, certainly with respect to both textiles and shipbuilding. It is not the intention of the government, nor is it its policy, to enter into the GATT negotiations to shrink employment.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Your Honour will understand the difficulty that Canadian industry has, faced with the fact that documents circulated by this government indicate that precisely the policy we are taking into these negotiations is one which will result in a loss of jobs in the textile industry and a loss of jobs in the shipbuilding industry.

The document goes on to indicate it is expected by the negotiators going into GATT on behalf of Canada that there will be "particularly acute impacts on regional employment, notably in Quebec". Thus, we seem to have a situation where the Government of Canada is setting forth the positions Canada takes to GATT. These are not positions two or three months hence, but positions we have already taken to GATT in the early rounds.

The position of the Government of Canada is to lose jobs in the textile industry, lose jobs in the shipbuilding industry and