

Oral Questions

[Translation]

NECESSITY FOR COMPLETE INQUIRY

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. I have here the Public Accounts of Canada, and at page 73, where the Corporation's audited financial statements for 1986-87 should have been, there is only a blank space. The Minister informs us that a special team in his Department is making inquiries. Perhaps he could report to the House on the nature and scope of these inquiries. In fact, why doesn't he say outright that it will take a full scale investigation of the dossier—not just the financial statements but the functioning, management, operations and disposition of properties at Mirabel? That is what we need and that is what we want.

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, what is involved is how certain overhead expenses should be profiled. There has been some disagreement between the Auditor General and the Mirabel corporation. I have pursued that and we will have a response in the next two days.

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TRADE

EXPORTS OF WEST COAST SALMON AND HERRING

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The Minister in Prince Rupert suggested that the West Coast herring and salmon regulations issue would best be dealt with between Mr. Reisman and Mr. Murphy. Why wasn't it?

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, I do not remember making that observation. I would be pleased if the Hon. Member could produce a quote to that effect because I do not believe I made such an undertaking.

Mr. Fulton: I will produce it later today, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

● (1440)

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, it was in an interview the Minister gave on CBC and it will come much quicker than the text of the free trade deal.

PROCESSING OF FISH—CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): My supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. On October 28 the Prime Minister said that the Liberal and New Democratic Parties

were opposed to the interests of western Canada. Since the new trade text stipulates that Canada can ensure that fish caught in Atlantic waters must be processed in Canada and that the same rate is not extended to the West Coast fisheries, placing a \$750-million industry and 6,000 jobs at risk, should not a right in a free trade agreement that applies to Atlantic Canada apply to the Pacific West Coast fishery?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I have already explained to the House that the specific issue of the West Coast fishery in salmon and herring is presently before the GATT where it has been decreed that our practices are not GATT consistent. Since the problem we have arises within the GATT, the solution must be found within the GATT as well.

I find it very strange that this Party which wraps itself in the GATT, says that GATT is the only way to go, and wants to say no to the free trade agreement because we will live up to our obligations to GATT, is the very same Party which is disputing our right to deal with this issue in the GATT and resolve it in the GATT.

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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

PRESENCE OF DIOXIN IN PAPER PRODUCTS

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare and concerns reports in today's press that dioxin has been found in Canadian paper products, including facial tissue and paper towels. In September, the Minister advised me in the House that his Department was doing a detailed assessment of this problem, but today's reports indicate that there have been no government tests conducted in connection with the situation.

Will the Minister advise the House whether or not there are tests going on and what steps the Government is taking to protect the health of Canadians?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reply to the Hon. Member. In October of this year I commissioned an interdepartmental committee with representatives from Health and Welfare, from Consumer and Corporate Affairs and from Environment Canada, to address the issue of dioxins in products. That committee has begun its work. Once we have determined the parameters of the manner in which a study should be conducted, a detailed study will go forward as well.

I know what the Hon. Member is referring to when he refers to studies of dioxins in paper products. I am concerned that we have as much of a multidisciplinary approach to the question as possible, and that we have Canadian data.