

REQUEST THAT RCMP PARTICIPATE IN INVESTIGATION

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): I appreciate the answer and what the Minister has done to date, Mr. Speaker. I would like to suggest to the Minister that it would not look right in my view if at Petawawa we have the same people judging the same people, the same officers looking into the same mess in which they may have been involved—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): I am not talking about the wet or the dry mess either.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): I am talking about the problem, and it is a serious one.

Will the Minister engage a third investigative party such as the RCMP to be part of that investigation, so that not only will there be total objectivity but there will be the appearance of objectivity from a third disinterested party?

Hon. Paul Dick (Associate Minister of National Defence): I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that the board of inquiry will be made up of three people. This comes under Mobile Command based in St-Hubert.

I take the Hon. Member's representations and I thank him for them.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—
COMMERCIAL BLOOD BANKS

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Several weeks ago the Minister for International Trade stated when asked questions about the relationship between the free trade agreement and blood banks, "The U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement has nothing to do with blood".

We see today from press reports that the Minister of National Health and Welfare, in fact, confirmed that under the free trade agreement American blood banks for profit will be allowed to operate in Canada.

Who is speaking for the Government on this issue?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, maybe I can clear up the misunderstanding which the Hon. Member has. The Minister cleared it up a few weeks ago but I will just repeat the situation. First, the Government strongly favours the current not-for-profit blood supply system. Second, there is nothing in the free trade agreement that will interfere in any

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way whatever with the continuation of the non-profit system administered through the Canadian Red Cross, nothing.

The agreement imposes no obligation on Governments regarding the purchase of blood and blood products. Therefore, Governments will remain free to use the Red Cross as the sole supplier to the health care system. The non-profit blood system can be maintained.

[Translation]

INCLUSION OF COMMERCIAL BLOOD BANKS IN AGREEMENT—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Minister of National Health and Welfare has confirmed that the free trade agreement will allow American commercial blood banks to operate in Canada. To clarify the matter, why did the federal Government put commercial blood banks in the agreement, if it is opposed to the commercialization or sale of blood in Canada? Why did they put commercial blood banks in the free trade agreement?

[English]

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, one point which the Hon. Member should keep in mind is that the Canadian Red Cross today purchases about 70 per cent of blood content supplies especially for haemophiliacs from the United States and Europe. There is a use for purchasing offshore—

Ms. Copps: You are commercializing blood.

Mr. McDermid:—and the Hon. Member should keep that in mind. I am sure she would not want to cut that off.

Ms. Copps: Blood for profit now.

Mr. McDermid: Second, the agreement does include commercial blood bank laboratories under its services chapter. This simply means that Canadian and American commercially operated blood banks, where they are allowed to exist, must be treated equally. That is all it says, nothing more and nothing less. The Hon. Member is chasing a pipe-dream with that one.

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IMMIGRATION

PROSPECTIVE IMMIGRANTS—CONDUCT OF HEARINGS BY
TELEPHONE

Mr. John Ostrom (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. The Federal Court of Appeal has ruled that prospective immigrants overseas have the right to an immigration hearing by telephone. This new procedure will cause a further delay in the existing backlog of cases. Will the Government appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada?