

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: I regret to advise the Hon. Member that her time has expired.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE**PINE TREE LINE—ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF BASE CLOSURES**

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday last the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) announced that the Pine Tree Line would be phased out and that most of the bases which are associated with that line would be phased out. Considering the economic hardships which will occur in the communities which are associated with those bases, both in terms of the military and civilian payrolls which will be eliminated, and the impact on the businesses which serve those bases, will the Minister of National Defence announce as soon as possible the time line for the phasing out? Also, would the Minister take steps to notify those Members of Parliament, in whose constituencies the closures will occur, and the mayors of the associated villages and communities, of the particular time line phase-out?

Due to the fact that military personnel will be transferred, will the Government take active steps to ensure that all civilian personnel who are attached to the Pine Tree Line bases will be provided opportunities for transfer within the Public Service, and that alternate uses for the bases will be considered?

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**ACID RAIN—APPOINTMENT OF CANADIAN AND UNITED STATES ENVOYS**

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment I would like to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. My question relates to the announcement of Mr. Davis and Mr. Lewis as part-time envoys on acid rain.

In view of the fact that we have in Canada—as initiated by previous Liberal Governments—a plan to cut smoke-stack emissions by 25 per cent between 1980 and 1990; a political and factual commitment to cut smoke-stack emissions by another 25 per cent by 1994; considering the fact that we are down wind of 26 million tonnes of smoke-stack emissions which emanate from the United States; and in view of the fact that there have been years of joint research on this matter, what will the Government know a year from now that it does not already know?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House

that the agreement which was arrived at yesterday, as stated by the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States, certainly represents a significant move forward. I would point out to the Hon. Member that the agreement breaks the deadlock which has existed for a number of years. It is the first time that a President of the United States has acknowledged that the acid rain problem is one which we share, and that we must work jointly to resolve it. At the end of this year we will see the work which will have been accomplished by two very prominent envoys who were appointed to the job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

NATURE OF AGREEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I hate to give a lesson in history to the Acting Prime Minister, but I would like to remind her that in 1981, during his visit to Ottawa, President Reagan made the exact recognition which he made yesterday. There is nothing new and nothing historical about it.

Would the Acting Prime Minister not admit that what was announced yesterday is a face-saving device which admits the political failure of the Prime Minister to convince his political counterpart that there is a problem which needs real action; and that it is a face-saving device which removes pressure for at least one year from the Washington administration? In essence, is it not just another do-nothing policy for another year?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I can understand the Hon. Member's obsession with face-saving devices. People in his Party know all about them, as they have been dealing with those devices for the last number of months.

I would also say to the Hon. Member that in the last four years, he, as the previous Minister of that Department, was not able to achieve any agreement with the United States. He did not move the issue a single step forward. He should not sit there and speak sour grapes because movement is being made.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCERS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder what the Deputy Minister is going to say next year to reassure maple syrup producers whose production is being affected by acid rain.