

Oral Questions

But the Industry Minister knows that Montreal is the unemployment capital of Canada, as was said today. I would like to ask him this question: In these two months, why has he not faced up to his responsibilities and refused the sale of a company which will be very costly across Canada, which will cost Montreal, Toronto and all of Canada very dearly? Why has he not refused it?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, even if the hon. member for Hamilton East shouts untruths in French or in English, it does not change the facts.

Again, what she is referring to, a study from two months ago, deals with a hypothetical sale because it was proposed to Investment Canada at some point but has not yet happened. Let them try to frighten people, Mr. Speaker, but not in the constant and illogical way that the member for Hamilton East is always doing in this House. I ask her to show the maturity that goes with the position she holds as deputy leader of a political party. She is absolutely unable to give people the straight facts.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, those are Liberal projections, but we had them for 20 years and that was enough.

• (1440)

[English]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Prime Minister. It too concerns the sale of de Havilland.

Yesterday the Prime Minister boasted:

Canada needs foreign investment and we are going to invite foreign investment and create national investment.

Will the Prime Minister level with Canadians and demonstrate exactly where that foreign investment is when his government practically gave away de Havilland in 1986 and now the French-Italian consortium will be paying big dollars not to Canada but to a giant American corporation, Boeing, based in Seattle, Washington?

How does that transaction benefit Canadians and Canadian workers?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, if my friend wants to listen to me, I will repeat what I said before.

In 1986 Boeing Canada bought a company for about \$890 million which at the time faced big difficulties.

Today this government put in about \$90 million for 500 more jobs than it had at the time. The company spent about \$700 million or \$800 million on de Havilland since 1986.

It is what I call a good investment. I know that the Liberal Party is against foreign investors. I prefer the message I gave abroad about Canada and the way we want to see money in this country from all countries in the world, rather than the way you did it and almost killed the economy of this country.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, Liberals are not against foreign investment.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Marchi: Liberals are against foreign takeovers. Canadians expect this government to stand up for Canada for a change. That is what we are for.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Marchi: It is not the foreign investment; it is foreign takeovers.

I return to the minister. The Prime Minister laughs and continues to read householders while Rome burns, but this is his prerogative.

Given that de Havilland is the largest industrial employer in Toronto and that millions of dollars of contract work to Canadian firms are tendered each year across the country, can the Prime Minister or the minister guarantee that if the new deal were to go through present levels of employment will be maintained, research and development will be continued in Canada, the plant will continue to build a full and complete aircraft and Canadian suppliers will be maintained?

Will he give us this reassurance on behalf of Canada and not some Boeing corporation in Seattle, Washington.

An hon. member: Seattle, Washington.

Mr. Speaker: I have to point out that that becomes a very hypothetical question. The minister may want to deal with it.

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, first I want to say that de Havilland is not a Canadian owned company. It is already