

● (1125)

PREDICTION OF LOWER EXPORT GROWTH

Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta): Mr. Speaker, this same leaked government document states that, over the medium term, export growth may not match advances in imports and that recent record surpluses in Canada's merchandise account owe more to the depressing effects of the relatively more severe recession in Canada on imports than to superior export performance. How does the Minister expect to give Canadians hope for the future when there are no long term solutions coming forward to address these very devastating predictions of his own Departments?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of State for International Trade will be happy to provide the Hon. Member with additional information. I would remind him that last year, we had the greatest trade surplus in Canada's history, and that this year, our trade surplus is expected to be even greater.

[English]

The trade surplus of Canada in the last two years will have been at record levels. We intend to pursue, through the dynamic policies put forward by the Government in terms of export trade, this excellent record and continue the policy by which Canada will be one of the largest trading nations in the world, taking into account its total production. I think we have a good record to go on, and we will build upon that.

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CANADA-UNITED STATES TEST AND EVALUATION AGREEMENT

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF CRUISE MISSILE TESTING

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that the constitutionality of the Cruise missile agreement is now to be tested in the Federal Court of Canada, has the Canadian Government informed the Government of the United States that the Cruise missile agreement will have to be suspended until there is a final court ruling on its constitutionality?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would imagine that the U.S. would be kept informed of this by the offices of their own ambassador. However, the question seems premature to me. We have no reason to believe that the question will not be settled finally, very soon. Indeed, I would welcome that it be settled. If it is not settled by December, the Hon. Member could ask a question again and it would be pertinent.

Miss Jewett: I thought the Prime Minister would follow his own previous practice of suspending discussions and so on

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when a constitutional matter is before the courts. I would hope that he would still do that.

REQUEST FOR HALT IN PLANS

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in addition to suspending the Cruise missile agreement pending the final court ruling, will the Government also halt any further plans and preparations for Cruise missile tests in northern and western Canada until there is a final court ruling on the constitutionality of the agreement?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member talks about suspending discussions on the matter when it is before the courts, and she is the one who raises discussions on the matter when it is before the courts. As far as the Government is concerned, it has taken a decision and has announced a policy. That stands until the courts strike it down.

We are not in a process of testing now, and the Hon. Member knows that. The tests, if they take place, would only be in the new year. That is why I say the question is premature.

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THE PRESS

FUTURE OF DRAFT NEWSPAPER BILL

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Prime Minister. Is the draft newspaper Bill dead? If not, what Minister is responsible for it?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have not yet formally assigned the Bill. It will eventually go to the new Minister for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, but there is no question of dealing with it in this part of this session of Parliament. Therefore I have not formally advised her as yet, but I plan to do so in writing in due course.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT WITHDRAW MEASURE

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, the Bill was ostensibly released this summer in order to solicit public opinion on it. In view of the fact that the public opinion expressed has been almost overwhelmingly in opposition to the Bill, will the Government now reassure those who feel that the Bill is an attack on freedom of press in Canada by announcing that it will not proceed with the Bill in its present form?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker. I know that views were expressed on the pros and cons of the subject matter of the Bill. That is why we released it, so public opinion could be expressed. However, the decisions are not made by the public but by Members of Parliament, and in due course even the Hon. Member will have to decide