

Oral Questions

My understanding is that there has been, in fact, a willingness on the part of Israel to accept the visit of representatives of the Secretary General. We think that is an important step forward.

With regard to the question of the PLO and Canada's relations, the hon. member will know that the government has acted to increase the level of contact between Canada and the leadership of the PLO. We are trying to use that contact to encourage continued moderation by leadership of the PLO.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade, but in his absence, I will put it to the Minister of External Affairs.

In my riding, the U.S. government has shut down the Port of Bridgewater, a port that we export a great deal through and that is creating a great deal of hardship on exporters in New Brunswick. It appears to be in violation of Annex 406-D of the free trade agreement.

What measures has the government taken and will it take to ensure the long-term viability of our exporters in New Brunswick, considering the hardship that the U.S. government has unilaterally placed on our exporters in the province? Does the minister have an answer and a suggestion for us?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member, not only for that question, but also for raising the issue a while ago with my colleague, the Minister for International Trade.

We are concerned about the pattern that appears to be developing. We have been in touch with U.S. Customs. It is our understanding that any action that might be taken would not be taken before very early in July. We are seeking formal meetings to discuss details of this practice. We are also seeking help from businesses and associations involved as to details that may help us make effective representations to the United States that would protect Canadian interests.

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Today in Montreal, the Green Coalition is boycotting government hearings on the so-called Green Plan. The coalition says that with time and money on their side, polluters and pals of the government control every discussion, and the government is trying to cover up its failure to act on environmental issues with high sounding words behind closed doors.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House whether the part-time Acting Minister of the Environment is prepared to open these hearings to the general public and let Canadians know what is going on?

[*English*]

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Acting Minister of the Environment is in Montreal today participating in the consultations. The hon. member should appreciate that fact and should welcome it.

These consultations allow for a very broad public participation in the whole development of environmental legislation and policy in Canada. The degree of participation that has taken place across the country, with literally thousands of Canadians showing an interest to play a role in protecting their environment, is very heartening and something which encourages the Minister of the Environment. He certainly will be reporting to Canadians with regard to this.

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister, rather than to the acting acting part-time Minister of the Environment.

Environmentalists told the government a year ago what was needed in the green print for Canada. The government has had its own Green Plan for months but it has been hiding it from Canadians. No wonder the coalition refuses to be part of thwarting the will of Canadians for action on the environment.