

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister for International Trade): The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the government acted and acted vigorously to bring to a successful conclusion the Uruguay round of the GATT. That success will go some way to resolving some of the dispute procedures which the United States has chosen to follow in its ill-advised and unwarranted activities.

In addition, during the adoption of NAFTA by this government we put in place a requirement that Canada, the United States and Mexico would discuss among themselves practices pertaining principally to anti-dumping, the major tool which the United States uses in its continuing harassment of Canadian exports to the United States, so as to resolve just this sort of issue.

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PULP AND PAPER INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

A recent report states that pulp and paper mills expect to lay off 15,000 to 20,000 workers before the year 2000. Given the fact that this industry is one of the oldest and most important manufacturing sectors in Canada both in terms of its contribution to the national economy and in terms of jobs, what measures is the government taking to prevent these massive layoffs which would have a devastating impact in my province of New Brunswick and across Canada?

Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Training and Youth)): Mr. Speaker, I share my hon. colleague's assessment of the critical importance of this industry which currently employs more than 72,000 Canadians and sustains the economy of countless rural communities across Canada.

The Minister of Human Resources Development, his cabinet colleagues and I are now in the process of reviewing this report which was commissioned by HRD. Certainly the report's key recommendation for more training is very consistent with the minister's strong commitment to building an active labour force.

Let me assure this House that we as a government will work in close collaboration with all partners to find innovative initiatives which will support and revitalize this industry and the affected communities.

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CONSTABLE TODD BAYLIS

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, Constable Todd Baylis will be buried today.

On Monday the Minister of Human Resources Development said the man charged with his murder was never deported because the Canadian government had difficulty obtaining travel documents for him. It has since been reported that Clinton Gayle's travel documents were in order but the immigration department lost track of his file. Jamaica's consul-general said her office has no record of Canadian officials applying for such documents.

The minister promised an investigation immediately into this tragedy. This session is about to end. We need answers today. Can the minister of immigration tell us the results of this investigation today?

Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, once again we would like to express our deepest personal sympathies to the family of the police officer who was killed in the line of duty.

The minister was in Toronto on Monday and he shared the deep sense of grief felt by the community in these terrible circumstances. He asked me to assure the House that senior officials are in the process of gathering all the facts but that at this point it would be inappropriate to comment further.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, it has been talked about these being rare cases. This is no comfort to that particular family. Last year, of 25,000 deportations ordered less than 9,000 were actually carried out. Of these more than 3,000 are criminal immigrants who cannot be located. It makes Canadians wonder how many Clinton Gayles there are out there.

● (1450)

Yesterday immigration officials in Toronto refused to round up deportees without police backup. One immigration officer said "we're under-staffed, under-trained and under-equipped". It is obvious that there are fundamental flaws in the system.

Will the minister launch a full investigation into the entire deportation system and will he make a report public before we return in September in order to prevent more tragedies?

Ms. Mary Clancy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, on many occasions the minister of immigration has stated in this House and outside that he has absolutely no tolerance for people who abuse the system.

Amendments to the Immigration Act were brought in last week that deal with questions of criminality. Sometimes the figures as quoted by my hon. friend could be considered a little skewed, sometimes not. The difficulty here is that there are privacy considerations.

The minister has assured this House and I assure this House for him that an investigation is under way and that it will take all the proper measures necessary to ensure the safety of Canadians.