

Oral Questions

authorities she did not notify companies in Canada, so that all eligible companies could have obtained the exemption?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I am informed that the responsibility for informing the members of the forestry industry was assumed by the Council of Forest Industries which speaks for the entire forest industry. In that way those companies would have learned about it. A lot of companies did seek and get exemptions, which showed that the process was working.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

ESTEY COMMISSION REPORT—ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING GUIDELINES

Mr. W. Paul McCrossan (York-Scarborough): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. In his report last Friday, Judge Estey found that from 1982 or 1983 the managements of the CCB and Northland Bank took steps which overstated both the assets and the income of the banks with the unconditional approval of the banks' auditors. He also found that bank auditing and accounting guidelines were clearly inadequate. Will the Minister take steps to establish immediately an advisory committee of bankers, representatives of the accounting and auditing professions, and representatives of the Inspector General, to establish new, effective accounting and auditing guidelines as recommended by Judge Estey, so that the public of Canada can again place confidence in the financial statements of our banks?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Justice Estey made very clear that the Canadian banking system was sound and that Canadians should have confidence in it. With regard to the specific question of the Hon. Member, Mr. Justice Estey has made quite an interesting proposal. There have been some informal discussions along the lines which Mr. Justice Estey pointed out. It is a proposal into which we are looking more carefully. Hopefully we will be able to respond to it specifically in due course.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DETROIT INCINERATOR PROJECT—NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I understand that tomorrow he will meet with Lee Thomas, head of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Will he

undertake now, when he meets with Mr. Thomas, to press that official to take every possible step open to the American federal Government to ensure that the Detroit incinerator is not built without the necessary environmental protection equipment, in order not to put at risk the health and safety of people in the city of Windsor and in many other parts of southwestern Ontario?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can give the Hon. Member that assurance. I will be meeting with Mr. Thomas all day tomorrow. I have a list of about seven bilateral questions with which I will be dealing. The Detroit incinerator matter is the No. 1 question on that relatively short agenda. Mr. Thomas and I do not disagree on the environmental dimensions of the question. In fact we see eye to eye. The EPA was set back in the courts on procedural rather than on substantive grounds. The Ontario Government, the federal Government, and the U.S. Government are planning a full court press to do the very thing for which the Hon. Member has called.

REQUEST FOR REFERRAL TO INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister. If Canada and the United States see eye to eye on this matter, will he agree to obtain the consent of the United States for a reference of the matter to the International Joint Commission on a specific basis, which is not the case at present? Will he also join with the Province of Ontario in going to the United States courts in a new action to seek an injunction against the City of Detroit to prevent the incinerator from being built without the necessary air pollution equipment?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think it is because Canada and the United States agree on the environmentalism of the issue that it would be inappropriate to send it to the International Joint Commission. Matters on which we disagree are normally the ones which are sent to the IJC to have an independent arbiter for the purpose of resolving them. We are pursuing every possible legal and diplomatic route. We are linking arms with Queen's Park and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to see if we can resolve it. The problem is essentially with the State of Michigan and the City of Detroit, not with Lee Thomas, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the Government of the United States. That is why we are proceeding in the way that I have described.

● (1500)

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Windsor—Walkerville; one question please.