

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER TELEPHONE UNITED STATES  
PRESIDENT

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, will the Acting Prime Minister phone the Prime Minister in Quebec City today and plead with him, beg with him, to phone the President and tell him to get this off the agenda?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Order, please!

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I appreciate that the Member takes this seriously. I will allow, the answer but that is the same question again.

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, that sort of bombast is not going to help the matter one little bit. The Hon. Member is looking for leadership. That leadership has been taken by the Government and the Prime Minister—

**Mr. McCurdy:** Where is he?

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** —in initiating the talks with the United States leading to, if possible, a comprehensive trade agreement which will avoid, to the extent possible, this type of situation. If the Hon. Member is looking for leadership, he has got it and he should recognize it.

**Mr. Riis:** Sell out.

• (1425)

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MEETINGS

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Alberta's Intergovernmental Affairs Minister, Mr. Horsman, said yesterday that on Monday the provinces had reached a compromise deal with the federal Government on free trade which included, and I quote, "a ministerial meeting every month with Joe Clark". Would the Minister explain why a federal spokesman contradicted Mr. Horsman by saying, and I quote, "But it's not so". Who is telling the truth, Mr. Horsman or the federal Government?

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, who attended that meeting personally, is the only person who can answer that kind of detailed question. However, I expect that what the Official Opposition House Leader is doing, in all probability, is distorting the true nature of the facts.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I think what the Deputy Prime Minister is doing is directly attacking, and I regret this, the credibility of the Alberta Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Will he now reconfirm his Government's promise to the provinces to hold monthly

*Oral Questions*

ministerial meetings with them on the free trade talks? Will he reconfirm this promise which was stated publicly to the press by Mr. Horsman? Why is he trying to contradict it?

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence):** I am not trying to contradict at all, Mr. Speaker. I do question the accuracy of what the Opposition House Leader is saying. The Prime Minister has every intention of living up to whatever commitments he made in that meeting.

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER CONTACT UNITED STATES  
PRESIDENT

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, the President cannot veto anything that happens concerning softwood lumber after this petition is accepted by Mr. Baldrige so this is a crucial three days. I ask the Deputy Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance why the Prime Minister will not use these last precious hours of political leverage personally to contact the person he has called—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Langdon:** —Canada's best friend?

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry, that is the same question again. I will allow the answer but it is the last time.

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have responded to that question. The points have been made on many occasions. This is a quasi-judicial process.

**Mr. Deans:** Not yet.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** We have made the points very clear concerning the technical and legal elements of the process, so they will be fully taken into account at the time any decision is made. We have also made clear to the administration the importance of this in a political, economic, and regional sense. That is fully understood by the Government of the United States and it will be taken into account when that decision is made.

**Mr. Langdon:** The Government is trying to use a legal scapegoat which it does not yet have the right to use.

[*Translation*]

INQUIRY IF PRIME MINISTER IS AFRAID TO TELEPHONE UNITED  
STATES PRESIDENT

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is the conclusion I must make: Why is the Prime Minister afraid to call the President of the United States?

[*English*]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That is simply the same question. The Hon. Member for Westmorland—Kent.