

Oral Questions

cards? Will the Minister consider taking similar action with our banks which are overcharging their customers?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, I gather that is one of many suggestions which the standing committee is looking at and I will respond when the committee reports.

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TRANSPORT

OPERATIONS OF CANADIAN TRUCKING FIRMS IN UNITED STATES—EFFECT OF PROPOSED U.S. LEGISLATION

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. As he knows, there is now before the U.S. Senate a Bill which will allow the President to restrict operations of Canadian trucking firms in the U.S. This is an incredible action at a time when the Conservative Government has introduced Bill C-18 and Bill C-19 which will give U.S. truckers favourable entry to and operating privileges in the Canadian market. What does the Minister intend to do to redress this most prejudicial situation for Canadian trucking firms?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we have no power to control what legislation is introduced into the U.S. Congress. That is a matter for members of the U.S. Congress, either Representatives in the House of Representatives or Senators in the Senate. They can introduce what legislation they like. However, we would naturally oppose, and put forward strong arguments to the U.S. administration asking them to oppose, any such legislation because we expect to have reciprocal rights there. We would then send into action our Secretary of State for External Affairs if that became necessary. I would even accompany him myself if I thought that might be of any help, and I hope it would.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Do you want the answer to this question or not? In the meantime I wrote—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Minister will—

Mr. Crosbie: I will just tell you about my letter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Papineau.

CANADA-U.S. MOTOR CARRIER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, it is clear from the answer that the Government should have done its homework before introducing Bill C-18 and Bill C-19 to make sure that the U.S. Congress did not introduce that kind of legislation. The Government did not do its job.

I can suggest a solution. Is the Minister ready to upgrade the role of the Canada-U.S. Motor Carrier Consultative Committee to that of a body which could formally make policy recommendations to both national Governments as well as the states and provinces?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take that suggestion under advisement, as well as any other suggestions the Hon. Member has which will be helpful. I would certainly be pleased to have them. Surprised but pleased.

I have already written Mrs. Dole, the Transportation Secretary, in connection with legislation which I think was introduced in the Senate with an amendment which has to do with trucking fees which they are attempting to increase. I made a strong protest. She has protested to those in charge of the Bill. I hope that provision will be changed.

● (1500)

However, if the United States of America does not treat our truckers in a manner that we consider fair and equitable, we will do unto them as they have done to us, plus.

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ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

LYELL ISLAND—HAIDA CLAIM

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. In a recent judgment regarding Meares Island, Mr. Justice Peter Seaton concluded that there are few imaginable aboriginal rights left in an area that is clear-cut. Would the Minister, who is the only Minister in this House with direct responsibility, tell the House what steps he is now prepared to take in support of the Haida people in their quest for recognition and affirmation of their aboriginal title and rights to Lyell Island?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, the rights have been recognized. The comprehensive claim of the people has been recognized. We cannot, as the Hon. Member is fully aware, act unilaterally in providing those rights unless we have the Province of British Columbia with us. I hope, through discussions which I and my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, have had, to assist in the Lyell Island and Meares Island issue. However, we cannot act unilaterally. There is a recognized claim, but it cannot be fulfilled by the Canadian Government alone.

REQUEST FOR ACTION TO STOP LOGGING OPERATION

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister is aware, the Prime Minister personally contacted Premier Vander Zalm in recent days and requested an end to the