

Oral Questions

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF FISHING QUOTA

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting that we should unilaterally break off relations. I am suggesting that we should follow the EEC example. When EEC members decided that the import of seal fur into those countries, was not in their best interests, it was banned. That ruined the economy of Newfoundland.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: If we decide that the EEC is overfishing our stocks and ruining the economy of fishermen in Atlantic Canada, it is quite simple. We do not break off diplomatic relations with those countries; we tell them that their licences are withdrawn and that they have no more quotas in Canadian waters unless they are prepared to live with the agreements which they signed. That takes courage and commitment. You have got to show some leadership to have that kind of action take place.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. John A. Fraser (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the options which the Hon. Member has shouted across the floor of the House are, of course, options which are available. It would not surprise me, or others, if the concern of the Hon. Member and other Hon. Members in the House in all Parties will be very vigorously put—or, indeed, is being very vigorously put—to our friends in the EEC and our friends in the Federal Republic of Germany. I can assure the Hon. Member that I shall let the appropriate people know just how enraged he is today.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NICARAGUA—REQUEST THAT CANADA INCREASE TRADING LINKS

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. It concerns the unilateral American decision to impose a trade embargo on Nicaragua. It is an utterly disastrous decision, as I gather the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs have said.

I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister, in addition to the social and economic assistance to Nicaragua that the Secretary of State for External Affairs said would be continued, and in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, will the Government consider compensating for at least some of the U.S. trade by encouraging Canadian trade in the crucial areas of machine tools, pesticides, fertilizers, and other products which have now been denied to Nicaragua by the U.S. embargo?

[Translation]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): As I told the media yesterday, Mr. Speaker, our diplomatic

and trade relations with Nicaragua remain normal, and we intend to go on promoting international development. I would think that the trade embargo which has just been imposed by the United States has no extraterritorial connotations and, as a country, we will of course follow the situation very closely.

[English]

SUGGESTED ROLE FOR CANADIAN COMPANIES

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that answer. Perhaps I could turn to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion to ask him that if no extraterritoriality will be applied—that is to say, that American subsidiaries which are operating in Canada can continue to export various goods to Nicaragua—can he also assure the House that the Canadian Government will give some active encouragement to Canadian firms and, indeed, Canadian subsidiaries of American firms, to fill up the slack which will be grievously difficult for Nicaragua, in fields such as machine tools, pesticides, fertilizers, and similar products?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Hon. Member that there has been absolutely no indication of any pressure being brought by Washington or other American sources to restrict Canadian companies from carrying on whatever trade relationships they feel are appropriate with Nicaragua. Of course we will monitor that type of thing. I can assure the Hon. Member that I do not anticipate that there will be any pressures of the nature to which she has referred.

BEEF QUOTA NEGOTIATIONS

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that there would have been some active encouragement for Canadian firms to fill the slack, particularly in products such as machine tools. I hope that the Minister will give that encouragement.

In my final supplementary question I will return to the Acting Prime Minister, as neither the Minister for International Trade nor the Minister of Agriculture is in the House. I would like to ask the Acting Prime Minister about the very critical matter of Nicaraguan beef quotas. For four months the Nicaraguans have been negotiating their 1985 beef quotas and they have not as yet received an answer on those quotas. Could the Acting Prime Minister or the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion assure us that the quota on beef imports from Nicaragua will be kept at least at the 1984 level, which was 9.7 million pounds?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the Hon. Member that in relation to beef quotas generally, including those which might apply to Nicaragua, the Government of Canada will be equitable and fair. Those quotas will be announced in due course.