

[Translation]

TEXTILE INDUSTRY

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Since the textile industry in Canada, and especially in the riding of Drummond, is an integral part of the economy and a major source of jobs, I would like to quote a few statistics that speak for themselves. In 1980, there were 80,706 jobs in this industry, while in 1983, there were 75,900, representing a loss of 4,806 jobs—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The Question Period is not for reading information into the record. It is for asking questions.

[Translation]

Mr. Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, considering these facts, could the Minister inform the House whether he intends to propose the introduction of global quotas and controls on increases in the volume of imports, so as to create an environment that is more likely to attract investment in this industry, and give the industry a chance to restructure, to adjust and to streamline its operations so that it can continue to survive in a very competitive market?

● (1450)

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question of the Hon. Member for Drummond, I should like to assure him that the situation with respect to the textile industry is one of the higher priorities in our Department. The statement made by the Prime Minister when he was in Sherbrooke on July 26 of this year, setting out 10 points which our Government would follow, is certainly what we are now concentrating on. I can only assure the Hon. Member that we have already met with representatives of the textile industry to work out a long-term plan for that industry. I think all members of the industry, including its workers, will be very pleased with it.

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ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

ACTIONS FOR DAMAGES FOLLOWING VALLEYFIELD BRIDGE MISHAP

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Would he confirm that literally dozens of notices of legal action have been served on the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, totalling millions of dollars, and citing the Authority for negligence and improper maintenance in the breakdown of the Valleyfield Bridge? While he is on his feet would he inform the House what discussions, if any, have taken place with

Oral Questions

Stelco in Hamilton to guarantee an alternate supply of iron ore, in light of the fact that seven shiploads of iron ore are tied up in the St. Lawrence Seaway system at a critical time for Stelco? What is being done to prevent further lay-offs?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the fact that there are intentions by the shipping companies to take legal action. Legal counsel has been appointed. We will be dealing with it in the appropriate manner.

In so far as the other part of the question is concerned, as I indicated yesterday, officials of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and my Department are doing everything possible to restore normal service. The best we can do at this particular time is to try to get the bridge in operation, and that is what we are doing. Some of the other points which the Hon. Member made are somewhat hypothetical. We will try to get the bridge operational as quickly as possible.

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[Translation]

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SOLAR ENERGY INDUSTRY—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, my question is not taken from the Toronto newspaper that has been quoted many times today.

My question is directed to the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Siddon). The Minister is aware that the solar energy industry, consisting of a number of small Canadian-owned companies, is in a crisis situation as a result of the Government's budgetary cutbacks.

In the days to come, many of these companies will have to decide whether to lay off employees or simply to close down.

Mr. Speaker, my question is quite straightforward: What does the Minister intend to do?

[English]

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated in the House on previous occasions, the decision to terminate the special program designated to alternate energies does not in any way inhibit the solar energy industry, or any other alternative energy industry, from coming to the federal Government with reasonable applications for support under a number of other available programs.

Mr. Berger: The Minister knows that that is totally impractical for many companies which had approved contracts that have been stalled by the Government.

REQUEST FOR TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister provide some form of transitional mechanism, a grandfather