

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: The question is one that normally should be placed on the Order Paper, or the hon. member might ask the minister whether he proposes to make a statement.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to take a chance if the House agrees. I sent him notice of this question and hoped this would give him time to gather his thoughts about the great work they are doing in this regard.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I think I can be very brief on that subject. Very recently I wrote a colleague of the hon. member giving him an indication of the activity of my department in the Maritimes in terms of industrial research and development and trade promotion.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, would the minister make that letter public so that the people of the Maritimes can know a little bit about this? They are greatly concerned that the minister is not doing anything.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**GUINEA—SECURITY COUNCIL CONDEMNATION OF INVASION BY PORTUGUESE FORCES—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. I asked him a few days ago about the Security Council's resolution condemning the Portuguese forces' invasion of Guinea. He said it was an important question and he would look into it. I wonder whether he is now in a position to answer?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I can answer this reasonably briefly. It may be, however, that you would wish the question to be put on the Order Paper for answer in writing.

An hon. Member: You are on your own, there is no help there.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government's opposition to the maintenance of Portuguese colonialism in Africa has been firmly declared and abundantly demonstrated. It has been reflected in our support for United Nations resolutions calling on Portugal to grant those territories self-determination. It was specifically enunciated in the government's paper on foreign policy.

Moreover, and this relates directly to a major clause of the December 8 Security Council resolution, Canada maintains a complete embargo on the sales of military equipment to the Portuguese territories, and we have long since ceased providing military assistance to Portugal under NATO mutual aid.

The resolution also asks Portugal's allies to influence the government of Portugal to comply with its terms.

[Mr. Speaker.]

The government of Portugal is in no doubt about the Canadian government's views on Portuguese policies in Africa.

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TRADE**FEASIBILITY OF FREE TRADE BETWEEN ATLANTIC PROVINCES AND NEW ENGLAND STATES**

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I attempted to ask it in the form of a supplementary to the question posed by the hon. member for St. John's West. Have studies been undertaken by his department in respect of the feasibility of free trade between the Atlantic provinces and the New England states in certain commodities, using the automobile pact as a model?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, this sort of preoccupation is constant in my department.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Don Valley.

ACTION TO DEAL WITH TRAFFICKING IN JAPAN IN CANADIAN IMPORT QUOTAS

Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, you have given me a substitute for the 5BX plan today. I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. What steps does the government propose to take to deal with the rapidly increasing amount of trafficking in Canadian import quotas which is taking place in Japan and other low cost exporting countries, creating a new class of millionaire Asian speculators at the expense of Canadian consumers?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I regretfully have to advise the hon. member, in spite of all the exercise he had completed prior to his asking the question, that his question is phrased in such a way that it would normally invite a statement that should be made on motions. Unless the hon. member is prepared to rephrase his question, I suggest it is not acceptable.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, in that case I ask the minister whether the government has taken any steps to deal with this situation?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the existence of quotas in Japan is well known. When I became the minister there were 120. They cut off 20 about a year ago. Last week the Ambassador of Japan wrote me that they were cutting off 10 more, including the quota on whiskey, about which we are pleased. The administration of quotas in Japan is not really my preoccupation. I assume it to be the exclusive responsibility of the Japanese government. However, as an exercise in academic intelligence I will look into the problem and report fully to my hon. friend.