

INDUSTRY

BIDDING ON STEEL FOR MANUFACTURE OF HOPPER CARS

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Madam Speaker, I wonder if someone—

An Hon. Member: Let them off the hook.

Mr. de Jong:—from the Government benches could bring in the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Nystrom: There he is.

Mr. Crosbie: Come on, Lumley; take your lumps.

Mr. de Jong: Madam Speaker, in the past Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Corporation has never been given the opportunity to bid on the steel being used in the construction of hopper cars. Can the Minister give us an assurance today that the manufacturer of the 1,280 hopper cars ordered by the Government will allow all steel mills, including Ipsco, to bid on the steel necessary to build these cars?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, we will do everything we can to encourage the ultimate manufacturer of those hopper cars, which has not been decided yet, to buy Canadian steel. My colleague, the Minister of Supply and Services, yesterday, for example, was speaking to the Canadian Shipbuilding and Ship Repairing Association where he put a real pitch in for them to buy Canadian steel for all ships they build. So obviously, Madam Speaker, this would be a priority for us.

Madam Speaker: Before I recognize another Member I would just like to say to the House that I very much resent the remark that I heard that I got someone off the hook. At twenty to three every day of Question Period it is time to go to the NDP. The Hon. Member for Beaches (Mr. Young).

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

WATER POLLUTION CAUSED BY U.S. LOVE CANAL DUMP SITE

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. As he knows, yesterday a Canada-U.S. task force issued a report on toxic pollution in the Niagara River. The report said that international water quality standards are being violated. It also said that some of the chemicals in drinking water can cause cancer, birth defects, mutations and nerve damage, to name only a few areas of concern. Certainly Members of this Party have told the Minister over the last year about the dangers to the Niagara River.

Tomorrow, Madam Speaker, a joint committee of the New York State Assembly is holding public hearings on what to do about the Love Canal dump site. Could the Minister tell us whether the Government of Canada intends to appear before

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that committee and make representations on behalf of Canadian interests, particularly when it is well known that the Love Canal is about the most dangerous site on the U.S. border?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, I have explained frequently, most recently in the Opposition day debate on environmental matters a few days ago, what the position of the Canadian Government is on making appearances before American courts. We have examined that question and came to the conclusion that, while indeed it might be welcome and we would endorse and support other levels of Government or public interest groups in appearing before American courts, it would be counterproductive for the Canadian Government to do so. The reason for that is that in opting to appear before the American court system we would likely foreclose other means of redress we would otherwise have.

In other words, if we decide to commit ourselves to the court process, there is a real danger that American governmental authorities would say, in effect, "You have chosen to go that route, you must live with the consequences. Therefore, we will not respond to you until the court process has dealt with the representations you have made." Since that could be a very lengthy process we are unwilling to cut ourselves off from other options of redress, which access to the court process on behalf of the federal Government might imply.

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THE ADMINISTRATION

CAPE BRETON COAL AGREEMENT—MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. I draw the Prime Minister's attention to the dispatch in the Canadian Press today which reads as follows:

A memorandum of understanding between Gillespie and his partners—Petro-Canada, Nova, an Alberta Corporation, Nova Scotia Resources Ltd. and Gulf Canada Products Co.—was signed in October, 1980.

Will the Prime Minister undertake to table in the House of Commons today a copy of that October, 1980, memorandum of understanding, and also the June, 1981, agreement?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I have just been talking to the Minister of Energy and he has said that he will investigate this matter, find out if there was a memorandum of understanding, find out the date, find out whether the guidelines were violated, and we will report to the House. We are learning by bits and drabs some suspicions over there. If they want to know about them, we will inquire, Madam Speaker. That is the position I have taken all afternoon. I did not happen to read the Canadian Press dispatch from which the Hon. Member is quoting.