Oral Questions

Mr. Gauthier: Will the Prime Minister call Mr. Crispo, tell him that the impression he left with his comments is wrong, dead wrong, absolutely wrong? Will he ask Mr. Crispo to get his facts straight or keep his mouth shut?

Mr. Speaker: I have to advise the House that the question may be of significance, but it does not fall within the jurisdiction of the government.

Ms. Copps: It certainly does.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member can put his question again and I will listen to it.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, he is an appointee of the government. Who the heck am I supposed to ask this question of? I am sure somebody took that decision.

Will the Minister of Communications answer the question since he is responsible for the CBC?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, your first comment of course is absolutely right, but I can say on behalf of the government with assurance that Mr. Crispo does not speak for the Government of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean–Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, the people of Canada expect the commissioner of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, a Crown corporation, to take their mandate seriously which is to promote national unity and serve the interests of the Canadian people as a whole. I ask the Prime Minister again: Is he prepared to call his friend, Mr. John Crispo, and tell him to get his facts straight before making statements? Will he tell him that the facts—

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last Friday, the Minister for International Trade admitted in this House that he had failed to prepare himself and to do an impact study of the Dunkel GATT proposals.

Will the Prime Minister please tell this House why his minister shows such wanton disregard toward Canadian farmers. Why is he not interested in the 100,000 jobs that could be at stake?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the question that the hon. member puts is similar to a question his colleague from Prince Edward—Hastings put yesterday, but they differ entirely from what the deputy leader of the Liberal Party in the House, the member for Hamilton East, said the government was doing.

We were criticized for seeking the co–operation of the supply managed groups before we even identified what tariff numbers could be found in the Dunkel text. After we had received their approval, we provided them with the numbers and said: "Will you agree with those numbers? Are they appropriate?" So far we have not had a response.

When we do that, the member for Hamilton East says that the government has changed its position. The government has not changed its position. If you wish to have an impact study, then I would like the Liberal Party to present that to the supply managed agency. If they request it of the government, we will work with them.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, no one should have to tell this minister to do his job. He should know on his own to do those kinds of impact studies.

[*Translation*]

I have a supplementary question for the minister. As he is no doubt aware, Canadian farmers do not want tariffs. On the other hand, they are very curious to know how much damage this government's proposals and Mr. Dunkel's will do. What specific measures will the government take to protect the farmers at the GATT negotiations besides telling us that it has no intention to even consider the damage it is itself causing?

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, we must be careful not to try and score political points on the backs of our farm producers. I have recently met personally with people from the International Agricultural Trade Office, the UPA president and spokespersons for the milk producers. We have mutually agreed to exchange, at their request, information on the