

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: An Hon. Member's question that refers to the activities of anybody in light of the guidelines may well be appropriate. However, the Hon. Member has gone further than that. The Hon. Member, I think, has just made a charge. On other occasions I have said that preambles or questions cannot be used in this place in lieu of a formal charge. The Hon. Member, I believe, is wanting to inquire of the Government, as to what its view is of a certain event. That is a legitimate question in light of conflict of interest guidelines. If the Hon. Member will allow me to reinterpret the question, I think that that is the question. It is not appropriate to lay a charge by way of preamble or by question. The Hon. Minister.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, a similar question was put yesterday and I answered it. The Hon. Member will find that answer at page 19111 of *Hansard*.

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister—I doubt deliberately—missed the point. The Minister for International Trade has changed his story on the reason for the receipt of the trip. Earlier he said it was a trip given to his wife and to his daughter which, of course, would not be covered under any section on public declaration. He later clarified that, after the Deputy Prime Minister made a statement in the House, and stated that his spouse and his daughter were representing him in a semi-official capacity.

Since they were representing him, since the trip was worth approximately \$6,500, there is an onus on the Minister to declare. I wonder if the Deputy Prime Minister can tell us whether, pursuant to Subsections 1 and 2 of Section 35, the declaration was made?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the answer remains the same. I invite the Hon. Member to reread it.

Ms. Copps: You did not answer it yesterday.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, the Government has long claimed that the trade deal would have no effect on regional development programs. For example, the

Minister of Finance stated in the House on October 16, 1987, as reported in *Hansard* at page 10087:

Our ability to deliver regional development programs to all parts of Atlantic Canada will remain absolutely unchanged and unaffected by this agreement.

This morning on *Canada A.M.* the Minister for International Trade admitted that the trade deal provides no protection for regional development programs, and that under the deal the next five to seven years will define subsidies, and we will then know what is permitted and what is not.

My question to the Deputy Prime Minister is the following. Will he not now be forthright about this and admit that the end result of this trade deal will affect regional development programs? Why not be honest about it?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, we are being honest about it, and it does not affect regional programs.

I am surprised at the Hon. Member for St. John's East saying that, after this Government committed itself to help Hibernia and the people of Newfoundland. I am absolutely surprised. That came in long after the free trade agreement was signed. What is the Hon. Member talking about?

ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, we were also told that water was not in the deal, Mr. Speaker.

We know that ACOA is five-year program which some government Ministers have already called the last kick at the can for Atlantic Canada. Coincidentally, this five-year period is the same period in which subsidies are to be defined under the trade deal.

Will the Minister, or his representative, not come clean and admit that ACOA could in fact be the last regional development program for the Atlantic provinces, because of this trade deal?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, first, no, I will not admit that. Second, the free trade agreement in itself is a regional development program, and it will help the Maritimes grow. It will create employment in the Maritimes. It will protect the industries that have been harassed all along.

The Hon. Member is away off base. No, it will not be the last regional development program for eastern Canada. This Government is committed to all regions of the country, and will continue to be.