

Government. The Hon. Member should appreciate that. There is no connection. If the 400 series makes sense, Boeing will be eligible for the assistance programs the Government has under the Defence Industry Productivity Program.

Mr. Kaplan: Why aren't they doing it?

Mr. Andre: Well, that is a decision for Boeing to make. The Hon. Member is reaching a judgment that there is some connection between this lay-off and the future plans that the company has not made and of which I am not aware. The Hon. Member is looking around for some bogymen or the sky falling in. The sky is not falling in.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): He's looking for an answer, Harvie.

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AIRPORTS

PEARSON INTERNATIONAL—REPORTED EXPANSION

Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Transport.

Recent media reports have stated that a decision to build a fourth and fifth runway at Lester B. Pearson Airport has already been made by the Department of Transport. I am sure all Members of the House realize the implications of such a decision on the people of Mississauga where the airport is located.

Can the Minister either confirm or deny this report? If the answer is in the negative, could the Minister give us some indication as to when such a decision will be made?

Hon. Shirley Martin (Minister of State (Transport)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the Hon. Member that the press reports are premature, as far as the decisions are concerned on the runways at Pearson Airport.

I am very grateful to the approximately 200 people I met with in southwestern Ontario and the Toronto area for their advice on what should be done at Pearson. Their comments, and the Department's investigation, are well under way. We will have an answer to that and other questions on Pearson in the early summer.

Oral Questions

FISHERIES

NATIONAL SEA PRODUCTS LTD.—CLOSURE OF PLANTS IN ATLANTIC REGION

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question about National Sea Products Limited to my good friend, the Minister for International Trade.

I would like to ask the Minister a question about the action taken by Mr. Gordon Cummings, the head of the National Sea Products firm. During the Free Trade debate, Mr. Cummings was a strong supporter of the free trade issue. He was later appointed by the Government to the de Grandpré Commission. He stated: "When the free trade deal goes through, in the case of Nova Scotia operations alone, I am confident we would be adding 400 people to our workforce as the tariffs come off".

Today the President of National Sea Products, the same person who predicted the 400 jobs, is announcing the closure of three more plants in Atlantic Canada with the loss of hundreds more jobs. I want to know what the Minister is going to do about it, considering the role he asked Mr. Cummings to play in this debate?

• (1450)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I think this is the first question I have had the pleasure of answering from my hon. buddy from British Columbia. The situation with respect to National Sea Products is this: It has no connection whatsoever with the Free Trade Agreement—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Believe me, Mr. Speaker, the Free Trade Agreement cannot put fish into the water. That is beyond the Free Trade Agreement.

I think Hon. Members may as well realize that there were serious problems in the fishery in the East Coast of Canada due to a combination of excess plant capacity and poor markets. For example, the number of fish plants in Nova Scotia increased from just over 200 in the early 1980s to almost 400 last year. The cod stocks off the province have fallen by 20 per cent in the last three years. That has left a lot of idle capacity. That is the problem that National Sea is dealing with. If it were not for the Free Trade Agreement, National Sea would be in a far worse position today than it is.