

*Oral Questions***TRADE**

IMPORT QUOTAS ON FOOTWEAR

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, will the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce advise the House when the government expects to announce that import quotas on footwear, which are due to expire on December 1 next, will be continued into the future as these quotas are very much needed to enable Canadian producers of footwear to obtain a reasonable share of the market so that many thousands of Canadian footwear workers will have jobs?

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, the cabinet is very close to completing its work on the appropriate elements of a new policy for the Canadian footwear industry for the future. We are very much aware that the present system of quotas will expire on December 1, and we know the need of our industry, including its workers, to be able to plan for the future. We are very aware of the importance of the industry to many parts of the country, and I look forward to making an announcement really quite soon.

ENTRY OF PRODUCTS FROM THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the minister state that he expects to make an announcement in the very near future. I hope it will be the kind of announcement I have been urging him to make for many weeks.

As a supplementary question I would like to ask whether the delay in making this announcement has been due to an expressed wish by the Prime Minister that markets such as Canada should be opened up to producers of the Third World, where labour costs are so low those producers can greatly undersell Canadian producers, the result of which would be to put many thousands of Canadian footwear workers out of work.

● (1450)

Hon. Herb Gray (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Madam Speaker, the time factors are related primarily to our earlier effort to put in place an appropriate policy for the textile and clothing sectors. We received the report of the Anti-Dumping Tribunal only on March 6. Once we had completed our work with respect to a new program for the textile and clothing sectors, we moved on to work on a policy for the footwear sector and, as I have said, I look forward to an announcement very soon, one that responds to the concerns and interests of all those involved.

The points my hon. friend has been making to me are very much the kind raised by many members on this side of the House. I look forward to be able to make an announcement, and I hope it will be one that will receive wide assent in the country and in this House.

IMMIGRATION

STATUS OF SHIP JUMPERS IN VANCOUVER AREA

Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I want to refer the minister to the statement which he made last week which was good news for some visitors from Poland who will be helped in their bid to stay in Canada, and also for the self exiles in eastern European camps. There is no mention about the 200 ship jumpers in the Vancouver area claiming refugee status and who are having to wait up to two years before they can determine whether they are eligible for refugee status.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the hon. member knows that not only did we increase the level of intake of refugees from eastern Europe but we also announced in the previous week relaxed criteria that applied to those here in Canada who are being sponsored by families or, if they are in Canada, that they would be granted work permits to allow them to gain employment for a year until the situation is clarified.

It is my belief that the people who are already landed in the Vancouver area would be eligible under those requirements. I will ask my immigration officials to take that into account.

ADMISSION OF REFUGEES FROM EL SALVADOR

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Madam Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. In view of the minister's generous relaxation of immigration regulations, which has just been referred to, for Polish people who are unwilling to return home, as he puts it, and in view of the more than 100,000 Salvadorans who fled their country because of the massacre of 20,000 there, many of whom wish to enter Canada but are prevented from doing so because of lack of access to Canadian immigration officers, will the minister do as he did when he sent the special team to Austria on behalf of the Polish people, and send a special team to Latin America for the purpose of interviewing El Salvadoran refugees who wish to come to Canada?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, the hon. member was not in the House at the time, but I will tell him that during last spring and summer we announced similar relaxed criteria for those from Salvador as we applied to the Polish refugees. Furthermore, we sent a special team down to South America to examine the situation and report back. We have, in fact, applied the same conditions.

I would point out to the hon. member that it is the position taken by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees that they do not want to encourage any large-scale movement from Central America because their priority for that region is for resettlement within El Salvador, or within the region itself. Because so much of our refugee policy is done in consultation