

Oral Questions

Government and without any consultation with any other party whatever?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I know the Hon. Member was an ardent proponent of the National Energy Program. There was only one problem with that program, it didn't work.

All that is being done here—and I am glad to see a smile on the Hon. Member's face because I think he acknowledges that fact—is enshrining the policy that was enunciated by this Government in 1985.

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BANKRUPTCY ACT

PROTECTION FOR WAGE EARNERS, SUPPLIERS, AND
CONSUMERS

Mr. Jim Jepson (London East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. As the Minister knows, the bankruptcy laws in this country are hopelessly outdated and leave little or no protection for wage earners, suppliers, and consumers.

In the new legislation which the Minister is presently contemplating, will he put protection in for wage earners, suppliers, and consumers?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, that is certainly the intent. We hope to bring forward legislation in the near future which will provide wage earner protection. We will have better consumer bankruptcy legislation, making it simpler and cheaper. We are exploring ways in which suppliers can be protected from what are close to fraudulent practices that occur all too often under the laws that exist today.

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TRADE

SERVICE INDUSTRY—EFFECT OF CANADA-UNITED STATES
TRADE AGREEMENT

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The United States scored a great triumph over Canada in negotiating a free trade agreement in services. The U.S. is a service exporting country and Canada is not. The service industry accounts for two-thirds of our economy and generates 70 per cent of our employment. Did the Minister secure provincial agreement to free trade in services which are under provincial jurisdiction?

• (1450)

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as the Deputy Prime Minister and the Prime Minister have said, there has been extensive discussion on all aspects of this agreement with the provinces, both at the First Ministers' level as well as at the officials' level. The Hon. Member should reverse her statistics and try to put a positive view on it. Yes, a large part of our economy and of our employment is dependent on services. However, could she not look at it a little positively and say in this open market with the U.S. maybe we could export some of those services?

The people I have spoken to since the agreement was signed, many of whom are in the service industry, are quite excited about the opportunities now afforded them because they can export services and follow up on some of their products with their service people to ensure they get the follow-up service required to make that market work for them.

PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION OVER SERVICE JOBS

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, as I said, the U.S. exports services and we do not. Some 83 per cent of all service jobs are held by women. Did you negotiate—

Mr. Speaker: I know the Hon. Member has an important question and I ask her, as I have asked others, to refrain from using the personal pronoun "you".

Ms. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, what provisions did the Government make to protect those jobs which are under provincial jurisdiction, 83 per cent of which are held by women?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I refer the Hon. Member to the Economic Council Review which discussed a number of aspects of the outcome of a free trade agreement. One of the conclusions they drew was that women would benefit more—

Mr. Rodriguez: They did not study the service sector.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Maybe I better address this entirely to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I want to assure the Hon. Minister I would certainly listen, as will other Hon. Members, please.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Mr. Speaker, this is from a background paper from the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women: "A free trade arrangement with the United States would improve economic prospects for Canadian women". The Economic Council of Canada agreed with that conclusion and said women would benefit more from a free trade agreement than would men.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

WATER RESOURCES

Mr. Speaker: The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.