

Oral Questions

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I will confess to the House to having had prior notice of the question, but I am sure the House will agree that it is an excellent question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I would also assure the House that the hon. member has asked it based on his own very sincere interest in this particular issue.

I am pleased to advise him that I am finalizing my discussions on this matter. The government will introduce legislation as soon as possible. That legislation will recognize the principle that the hon. member addressed, that is, measures to promote greater safety and responsibility in the acquisition of firearms.

I look forward to the support of all members of the House when this legislation is brought forward.

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[*Translation*]

TRADE

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last weekend the Prime Minister indicated he would support moves by Mexico to strike a free-trade deal with the United States. He also said recently that he would not be shocked by the eventual creation of a North American free-trade zone including Mexico and that such a zone could materialize in the next decade. My question is this: Does the Prime Minister intend to involve Canada in a process to create this free-trade zone with the United States and Mexico? Yes or no?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should have read carefully my speech as reported in today's paper. The article in *The Globe and Mail* says that:

[*English*]

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney yesterday offered warm words of encouragement for new Mexican trade initiatives but stopped just short of formally backing a free-trade deal between Mexico and the United States.

I indicated yesterday in Montreal, as I have indicated in other circumstances, that I believe the best way for developing countries to achieve prosperity and social justice is to be given the opportunity to enhance their trade, to have greater access to rich and dynamic markets and to have a greater facility to develop national wealth by trading internationally. Greater trade abroad creates jobs at home.

I believe that unless you adopt that kind of philosophy the rich continue to get richer and the poor stagnate.

I am very surprised to see that my hon. friend from the Liberal party would do anything other than encourage the Government of Canada, which is encouraging as best we can the Government of Mexico and others, to seek more liberalized trading arrangements with their partners and around the world.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister did not answer my question. I want to know whether or not he supports Mexico's initiative?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Mexican government does not need Canada's support. It may decide to initiate a dialogue with the Americans or the Brazilians. As far as I know, however, they have not entered into negotiations with their southern or their northern neighbours. I told Mexicans I would not be surprised to see a country such as theirs seek more liberalized trading arrangements with their neighbours to the north or the south. It seems only normal that a developing country like Mexico would be studying that possibility, since the G-7 countries have described the Canada-United-States free-trade agreement as a model for the whole world. If that is the case, the Mexicans could benefit from it, much to their credit.