

Oral Questions

I thought all our problems were supposed to disappear with the signing of this agreement. *The Financial Post* said the big industry winner was supposed to be the steel industry. Yet we are still being hammered by the Americans with protectionist measures, with tariff barriers, with non tariff barriers.

It just goes to prove that even in relation to the steel industry this trade deal is a sham. It was negotiated by a Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) who was operating on his knees, in a position of weakness, because he knew that the only way he was going to divert attention from his own maladministration was to focus on another issue. Let us tear this deal up.

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TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—DEBATE IN CLASSROOMS

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, the youth of Canada are studying and debating free trade in the classrooms of Canada. They know the heritage and tradition that began with the coureurs de bois that has become, through successive generations, the cornerstone of our livelihood so that today it is 23 per cent of our gross domestic product, involving three million Canadians at work, one million in Ontario alone.

They know that this agreement will enable our Government to build, with present-day coureurs de bois armed with new technology and new outlook, a more extensive world trade mandate for Canada. They know that they can be an active partner in building a brave new Canada.

All Members of the House should come together to applaud the initiative of our youth. They have learned about this deal and are more than ready to move ahead with it. They want us to see that our future is free trade.

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HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

DIOXIN—PRESENCE IN SHELLFISH

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, dioxins and furans are deadly toxic substances found in pulp and paper effluents and in shellfish and molluscs in then vicinity.

The reaction of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. MacMillan), the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Siddon) to studies about this problem shows a shocking complacency. They say that not all of the samples showed high levels of dioxin or furans. They say there are some excuses that can be found in the cases where there are high levels. "A small amount of dioxin is fine for one's health, but just do not have

second helpings". "Dioxins in the organ parts of an animal are a problem, so avoid that part of the body". "Chicken livers are contaminated, well, eat the wings". This is bad policy in principle, apart from the fact that some people do eat the organ parts of shellfish and consider them a delicacy.

● (1415)

Another statement made in the report was that excess dioxins were found in areas close to mollusc fishing in any event, so let us not worry about it. These are deadly substances. It is a serious problem. It is a crisis. This kind of complacency is shockingly irresponsible. I call upon the Government to take the problem seriously and clean up this highly contaminated substance.

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ABORTION

POSITION OF OPPOSITION PARTIES ON FREE VOTE PROPOSAL

Mr. Lawrence I. O'Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, the opposition Parties are against a free vote on the abortion issue. Why are they afraid of a free vote? Are they afraid to stand up and tell their constituents where they stand? What we in the pro-life movement know is that a free vote is in our interests.

A free vote is consistent with the principles of parliamentary reform which recognizes the desirability of more independence for Members of Parliament.

It is shameful that the New Democratic Party and Liberal Party want to stifle free expression on this important issue.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

BILL C-72—PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have some very serious questions for the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday the Prime Minister advised the House of Commons that he was unaware of any possible amendments that would gut Bill C-72, the Bill to amend the Official Languages Act. However, we have obtained the Government's own confidential document advising in depth proposed amendments by the Deputy Prime Minister to Bill C-72, amendments which would gut the Bill, which would be inconsistent with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and which would undermine the promotion of bilingualism in this country.

In light of the Prime Minister's statement that he was unaware of any proposed amendments, would the Deputy