

ask that the matter be left aside now and the Chair can return with a ruling on it. I want to assure Hon. Members that the Chair is very conscious of the undoubted right of the Opposition to seek information; in fact, it is the undoubted duty of the Opposition.

Mr. Broadbent: Right.

Mr. Speaker: I am also very aware that this is a place of free speech. However, we have our rules. As I say, I am now in the midst of a process where a question of privilege has arisen out of questions asked. That is a matter that I must decide. I shall decide it as quickly as I can and return to the House with that decision.

The Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

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[Translation]

TRADE

FREE TRADE—GOVERNMENT JUSTIFICATION FOR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and concerns the advertising campaign on free trade that is costing us about \$12 million, a campaign to try and convince Canadians that the Government of Canada has acted in their interests by giving away Canada's sovereignty to foreign investors. How does the Government intend to justify wasting money on this folder and distributing it in shopping centres, a publication that is full of exaggerated statements? How can it justify this propaganda at a time when spending cut-backs are affecting people who are desperately in need of funds? How can the Government justify this kind of publication at a time when its mandate is still far from certain, when it has nothing to show for its efforts and the talks are still going on? How can it justify this utter waste of money?

[English]

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I know this is part of the Liberal campaign to spread half-truths and no truths. The Hon. Member this morning said on CBC that this pamphlet in front of us is clearly erroneous. He went on to say that there was no consultative process before the agreement was made in 1985 to proceed with the negotiations.

The former Minister of Trade issued a White Paper and went across this country for months consulting with the provinces and with the private sector. There was a parliamentary committee that spent time looking at the White Paper and made a report to Parliament before the decision was made.

Oral Questions

Mr. Axworthy: And recommended against it.

Mr. McDermid: For heaven's sake, the Member is telling half-truths. What he is saying is absolutely false and he is going around the country spreading false information about this brochure.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary should have listened to the interview instead of getting somebody else who couldn't memorize it trying to repeat it to him.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is again for the Secretary of State for External Affairs concerning the shopping bag stuffer that he offered to Canadians yesterday.

The previous Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said as reported in *Hansard*, that there will be no more geese flying into the sunset. If it was wrong to have geese flying into the sunset in the name of national unity, what is so right about the turkeys on the other side walking across the U.S. border in a fog in the name of free trade? What is so right about that policy?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): It is too bad George Baker isn't here today.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): And that Crosbie is not here either.

Mr. McDermid: Pardon me, the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate.

As I go through this very excellent publication which provides information on the trade negotiations which Canadians have been requesting, I do not see a goose or a turkey in here but I see a lot of very important information which Canadians have been asking for and which they are going to receive.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: We see turkeys over there.

Mr. McDermid: I notice that the Canadian Labour Congress has put out a fancy brochure opposing it. Why doesn't the Hon. Member stand up and talk about that as well?

Mr. Speaker: The last question will be by the Hon. Member for Lévis.