

Oral Questions

Mr. Nunziata: You're afraid of him, are you?

Miss Carney: I again make the point that the position of the Government of Canada—

Mr. Nunziata: He's been pushing you around, hasn't he?

Miss Carney: They want to shut up the debate. They do not want to debate this issue on its merits, but rather on slurs, myths, and misleading statements. They do not have the courage to get up in this House and debate the free trade agreement on its merits—

● (1120)

Mr. Riis: Let's have a debate.

Miss Carney: —as our Government is encouraging Canadians to do.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, on March 16 in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister said: "Let Ambassador Reisman speak for Canada". He certainly does not speak for me, nor for the Liberal Party, nor for millions of Canadians. It is shocking that the Minister for International Trade, speaking on behalf of the Government, is willing to let Mr. Reisman run around this country in his official capacity expressing his personal opinions no matter how shocking and wrong they are.

Does the Minister not realize that if she continues in this unacceptable course of action—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gray: —she is not only showing that Mr. Reisman is out of control but that she and the Government are condoning these actions? Mr. Reisman is not any private citizen. He speaks as ambassador on behalf of Canada. This Government stands accused and convicted of allowing him to call Canadians Nazis. It has to live with those words.

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, it is not unusual for the Hon. Member to suggest that Mr. Reisman does not speak for him. It is very difficult to find out who does speak for the Liberal Party.

Mr. Nunziata: Simon says jump, Pat, jump.

Miss Carney: We are in the ludicrous situation where the Leader of the Liberal Party is saying that he wants to tear up the free trade agreement when a majority of his own Party supports it—

Mr. Gauthier: Who said so?

Miss Carney: —and when the president of the Sarnia-Lambton Liberal Association says his position is "totally irresponsible".

Mr. Nunziata: Jump, Pat, jump, says Simon.

Miss Carney: No wonder it is hard to figure out who speaks for the Liberal Party on free trade.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS—CONTENT OF AGREEMENT'S FINAL TEXT

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that when the Minister for International Trade says she wants to debate this trade arrangement on the merits, she is not serious. She obviously thinks it is acceptable for Canada's trade ambassador to call Canadians who have concerns, or who are worried about the trade deal, nothing but a bunch of Nazis.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Order.

Mr. Tobin: That is not a light matter.

I want to bring the Minister's attention back to something else she said this morning on the CTV Program *Canada AM*. When asked why she was rushing the committee process when in fact the detailed agreement is not before the committee yet, the Minister said with respect to the details:

All they're going to get when they do get the final text is a bunch of incomprehensible legal language that isn't nearly as clear to understand as what they have now.

When the text arrives, the Minister is saying it is going to be a bunch of incomprehensible legal language that no one will understand, not the Government, not the Opposition, and not the people of Canada.

Given this startling admission from the Minister who says she wants to debate the deal on its merits and on the facts, how can she proceed with a committee hearing, and how can she proceed to sign a deal, when she herself describes the legal text, even in advance of seeing it, as something that is incomprehensible? That answer is incomprehensible and, frankly, Mr. Speaker, stupid.

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I stand behind my quote on television.

Ms. Copps: I bet you do.

Miss Carney: The point I made, and I will repeat here, is that the "elements of the Agreement" that we filed in this House are a clear statement of what Canada is getting out of the free trade agreement.

Mr. Nunziata: You are Simon's puppet, Pat.

Ms. Copps: Simon says.

Miss Carney: Waiting for the text is not helpful to those who want to debate this issue on its merits.

May I point out in terms of the amount of debate which is going on, on which the Opposition is stonewalling, there was a Royal Commission that debated free trade for two and a half