

Order Paper Questions

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I too rise today under the provisions of the Standing Orders to present petitions on behalf of more than 200 individuals who live in and around the City of Thunder Bay, the rural community, Kaminstiquia, Atikokan, Murillo, Sioux Lookout, and even one of our suburbs, Edmonton.

The petitioners call upon the Parliament of Canada to reject the Canada-U.S. trade agreement. The petitioners argue that the Government had no mandate to negotiate it, and that it threatens the fabric of Canadian political and economic sovereignty.

The petitioners call upon the House to dissolve Parliament in order that a general election can be called so that they can directly pass judgment on the trade agreement.

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 106, I too have the honour, privilege, and responsibility to present a petition signed by people from the City of Hamilton.

This petition states that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) promised in the course of the bilateral trade negotiations that Canadian sovereignty would not be compromised. The trade agreement negotiated by the Mulroney Government threatens the very fabric of our Canadian political and economic sovereignty by removing the power of the Canadian Government to effectively control foreign ownership, to develop Canadian energy resources in the best interests of Canadians, and to equalize opportunities between the regions.

Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to dissolve and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed free trade agreement during a national general election.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 106 I have the honour to present petitions on behalf of people who are indicating that the Conservative Government does not have a mandate from the Canadian people to conclude a free trade agreement with the United States.

They believe that the trade agreement negotiated by the Government threatens the very fabric of Canadian political and economic sovereignty by removing the power of the Canadian Government to effectively control foreign ownership, to develop Canadian energy resources in the best interests of Canadians, or equalize opportunity between the regions of Canada.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to be dissolved, and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed free trade agreement during a national general election.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I too have petitions to present.

The petitioners point out to Parliament that the proposed trade agreement not only denies Canadians secure access to the U.S. market, which was the key objective in these negotiations, but threatens the loss of hundreds of thousands of Canadian jobs. —

Therefore, the undersigned petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to dissolve and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed free trade agreement during a national general election.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, again I have the honour to present a petition signed by Canadians who express their concern with the Government's trade deal.

They believe that the trade deal negotiated by the Government threatens the very fabric of the Canadian political and economic sovereignty by removing the power of the Canadian Government to effectively control foreign ownership, to develop the Canadian energy resources in the best interests of Canadians, or to equalize opportunities between the regions.

Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to dissolve and allow the people of Canada the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed trade agreement during a national general election.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We will certainly grant permission for the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to stand all questions. However, we would like some assurance from him, being that tomorrow is the last day he could answer questions this year, that he would make some attempt to have a number of questions answered at that time.

We would hate for our constituents and other concerned people to have to wait until some time in January or February to get responses to questions requesting information, some of which were placed on the Order Paper as long ago as last spring.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the tone of the Hon. Member's remarks and his concerns. In keeping with the rather excellent record of the Government in the last 3.5 years, which is very different than that of our predecessors, we will be as obliging as we can. We attempt to get Ministers to make it a priority but there are, as the Hon. Member knows, more important things from time to time, like free trade agreements and so on, which compel attendance. We will do our best to get as many answers as we can.