

Oral Questions

are contrary to the spirit of both the multilateral and the bilateral trade agreements which we are negotiating with the United States and will have serious implications for the passage of any future Canada-U.S. agreement? Do we still stand by the ambassador's statement?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I think the ambassador of Canada sent a letter to the Congressional committee on March 1 outlining a number of our concerns with respect to the omnibus Trade Bill to which we had strong objection. There have been changes made. Some of the more onerous provisions have been changed.

The Bill has been improved in quite a number of respects as a result of our representations and those of others. For example, among proposals dropped that were of particular concern to us were the House proposals to amend the definition of a countervailable subsidy, certain amendments to revise the anti-dumping law, the Gephardt amendment, and I cannot go into them all because the list would be too lengthy. The Bill has been improved. We do not know the final version of it yet.

In addition, if there are any provisions in an ominous Trade Bill—omnibus trade Bill passed by Parliament—ominous is also right because, I will tell Hon. Members this, if we do not get our U.S.-Canada free trade agreement agreed to, there will be many ominous moments with the United States Congress which is in a very protectionist mood.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Oh, yeah, just knuckle under. Oh, boy!

Mr. Crosbie: We are hardly knuckling under when we have secured changes in this legislation. If there are any provisions in the omnibus Trade Bill that are contrary to the free trade agreement stand-still arrangement, we will be expecting the American Congress to attend to that in the legislation that goes before it to approve the free trade agreement, if there are such.

Now, there will be changes, not concrete, to the stand-still agreement that we object to which will be in the omnibus Trade Bill. But next year, thank God, with the passage of the agreement, we will no longer be as vulnerable as we are now.

DEFINITION OF SUBSIDY

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Minister well knows, any measures passed in the omnibus Trade Bill by the U.S. Congress will become entrenched as part of the Canada-U.S. agreement. We will be obliged to administer that part of the U.S. trade law. It will be a classic case of shooting ourselves in the foot.

Ambassador Gotlieb clearly outlined that one of the most serious reservations was about a definition of subsidy, because it would limit a number of very important government economic and development programs. That measure is still in the omnibus Trade Bill, still clearly restricting any subsidy

that has very specific application to industry. Does the Minister stand by the commitment made by the ambassador that we will not proceed with the Bill and that we will have to provide our own Canadian legislation to offset that kind of damage that will be caused by the passage of this legislation in the U.S. Congress? That is a very important commitment. I want to know if the Minister stands by it.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of International Trade): Mr. Speaker, what I stand by is this. I do not know of any outside country that can control the legislation that is passed by the U.S. Congress. I can assure Hon. Members that the countries that will be best favoured when dealing with the United States will be those that have firm arrangements with the United States in their trade relations. As the Hon. Gerald Regan said on April 10, Canada cannot expect special treatment from whatever path they take in the future unless we have a specific, very comprehensive deal with them.

If we have a deal which is torn up by some other Party or some other Party Leader, then God help Canada and any—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[Translation]

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

DRUGS—PROTECTION OF CONSUMERS

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Miles Laboratory is trying to mislead the public and take advantage of the vulnerability of the sick. In a so-called educational bulletin called *Heart Beat*, the company uses fear tactics to persuade angina sufferers to get the company's medication instead of using the cheaper generic drug. My question is this: How does he intend to respond to this situation and protect the Canadian consumer, now that his friends in the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association seem to be able to do anything they like?

[English]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure precisely what the Hon. Member is getting at because the drugs in question, I understand, are all prescription drugs. One can only obtain them if a physician gives one a prescription for them.

Is the Hon. Member suggesting that I or someone else on behalf of the Government write to the physicians of Canada saying to beware, prescribe the right drugs, or something? I am not sure what problem he is alluding to. These are prescription drugs and physicians will prescribe the drug they think appropriate for their patients.