

Government opposed in principle and in practice to the extraterritorial provisions of the American Act? Does the Government intend to keep on demanding the withdrawal of the provisions in the omnibus bill, or is this his final answer? Will they keep on demanding that withdrawal, or will they simply respond with a kind of legislation that in the final analysis, will not prevent in practice the subsidiaries from crawling under the whip and control of the American head office?

[English]

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Chairman, I must say that it is a bit confusing. If one could understand what the hon. gentleman was trying to get at, one could answer his question but it is a very muddled proposition. The hon. gentleman's question is quite muddled, but let me attempt to answer it. We have no power and no authority to stop the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the European Common Market or any country from passing laws that they wish to pass. However, we can object to certain laws if they have an effect on us that we find objectionable, if they attempt to have an extraterritorial effect on Canada, its citizens or corporations in Canada, or if they attempt to exercise some kind of control over subsidiaries of their corporations in our country. We can object to that and have done so in the past.

Now we are asking the House to give us some effective means of acting to prevent those effects from being carried out in Canada. This will be more effective than protesting and telling the United States or whoever that we do not want them interfering or instructing their subsidiaries in Canada to do things that are those countries' policies but are contrary to Canadian Government policy. We will have an effective means of stopping that and that is what the Bill provides.

The evil about which the hon. gentleman is concerned is one that we can address if this legislation is passed. We can effectively put an end to it rather than just protesting to the United States or other foreign countries. We will also have a means of blocking the consequences of the action in their own country. That enhances our sovereignty, which is our national identity. That is why we are asking the House to pass this Bill.

● (1210)

[Translation]

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Chairman, what I am asking the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) is this: Is it his view that the American extraterritorial claims are legitimate, yes or no?

[English]

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Chairman, I suppose in the eyes of the United States they are legitimate. If we thought they were legitimate, then we would not be asking the House to pass this legislation. We believe companies that operate in Canada should obey Canadian law and policy. If Canadian law and policy is different in some respects from that of the United States, the United Kingdom, or France, the company, no matter where it is owned, has to comply with Canadian law

and policy. This Bill gives us some muscle to ensure that they do that.

[Translation]

Mr. Lapierre: The Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) has just said he does not consider them legitimate. Now, does he intend to let the Americans go on like this or is he going to continue to pressure them to remove them from their books? That was the position taken by the previous Government. We were saying: We are not only prepared to introduce a Bill to block the extraterritorial effect, but we also want you to withdraw the amendment. And that is what I am asking the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie). Does his answer apply strictly to his own Bill or is he going to continue pressuring the Americans to withdraw the offensive provisions from their legislation? That is what I am asking the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie).

Like the Americans, we all remember the debate on the "back-in". They not only considered it illegitimate but they also asked the Government at the time to withdraw it. It is the same thing. Does the Minister think it should be allowed to stay on the U.S. statutes? Mr. Chairman, we all know that whatever the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) says, if he protects branch plants of U.S. companies by means of his Bill, the parent company will get them some other way. His own leader has always taken his orders from the United States. Even if the Minister of Justice of Canada had told him not to listen to the United States, everybody knew his job was on the line. It is the same in all branch plants. What I am asking the Minister of Justice is basically: Does his Government intend to go on pressuring Washington to remove offensive provisions from U.S. legislation on extraterritoriality?

[English]

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Chairman, we believe it is wrong for the United States or any other country to pass laws that have extraterritorial effects in other countries. We will make that position clear to them whenever it arises in the future. In addition to making that position clear to them, if this legislation had passed the House we would have had some effective means of blocking what they are attempting to do. We cannot dictate, of course, to the United States Congress or the United States Government what kind of laws that country will have. We cannot dictate to their courts. We cannot force the Americans to change. We cannot force American courts to change their interpretations. But when it comes to Canada, with the help of this legislation we will have an effective means of blocking their attempts to have extraterritorial authority here in Canada. That is the whole purpose of the legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Justice is throwing in the towel and saying that this Government has no influence on the American Congress. On the other hand, have the United States and the American Government had any influence on this Government, for instance as far as the National Energy Program is concerned? This Government is