

Oral Questions

PROTECTION OF FISHING INDUSTRY

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, this grievance was initiated by the United States through GATT, but when we asked the Minister and the Government on several occasions about how free trade protected the fishery, the Minister always replied: "Yes, free trade does protect the fishery". Will the Minister now admit that the Government has not secured any protection whatsoever for our fishing industry against either present or future American laws, when the Government negotiated the free trade deal with the United States? Will she now admit that she and her Government took the Yankee bait, hook, line and sinker?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, my previous answer still stands. I believe the Hon. Member is referring to a GATT panel and it is interesting to note that that opposition Party has always placed all its eggs in the GATT process, and has always maintained that Canada would be better off relying solely on the GATT than on a negotiated agreement with the United States. I again say he is dealing with a GATT decision and it has nothing to do with the free trade agreement negotiated between Canada and the U.S.

ENERGY—PRICING POWERS OF PROVINCES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to direct to the same Minister. My Party has pointed out that as a result of this agreement, Canada as a nation, and our provinces, are going to experience a significant reduction in powers. Specifically, on October 8 I indicated to the Minister that the provinces' rights, in terms of pricing decisions on energy, have been substantially altered and reduced as a result of this agreement. The Minister on that occasion said that was wrong.

Considering that today the former Premier of Alberta, Mr. Lougheed, has publicly stated there has been a reduction in the rights of the provinces in terms of pricing decisions, does the Minister stand by what she said on October 8, or is she now saying the former Premier of Alberta is wrong, as well as myself?

Mr. Shields: Well, you are sure wrong, Ed.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Socialist Party always asks the same questions, so he will get the same answers. The rights of the provinces are set forth in the Canadian Constitution, not in the Free Trade Agreement with United States. The negotiations that took place between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States were not about the Canadian Constitution but about free trade between Canada and United States. In this Agreement, Mr. Speaker, the energy sector and especially the Western provinces will find things they have been wanting for years.

[*English*]

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows very well why, in his own briefing notes, the so-called sensitive issue was going to be left to the Prime Minister. It is because the Government knows, and the Prime Minister knows, that this Government is impinging upon the traditional constitutional rights of the provinces to control their own resources—and Mr. Lougheed has pointed that out.

PROCESSING OF FISH—GATT RULING

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a supplementary question, this time on the related issue of the lack of Canadian Government control over a policy option. My question for the Minister pertains to a preliminary ruling in the GATT decision which says that Canada, if it is subsequently confirmed by a full committee of GATT, will no longer have the right to set regulations about the processing of fish in our own country as a precondition for export.

It states in the agreement:

Both parties have agreed they will not maintain or introduce import or export restrictions except in accordance with the GATT, or as modified by the agreement.

Does this proposed agreement with the United States not lock us into accepting a GATT decision? I want to know the answer to that, yes or no?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I think I should point out to the Hon. Member that Canada has been a member of the GATT for 40 years.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): He is against it.

Miss Carney: If he seriously suggests that the free trade agreement in any way affects our obligations under the GATT, I think he had better rethink his position on that.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the Minister that just for once she should read the agreement because she was wrong with Peter Lougheed, she has been wrong with me in the past, and she is wrong again today. Will she listen to the question and read the agreement?

TERMS OF CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): I want to ask the Minister if it is or is not the case, according to this agreement, that in a subsequent decision reached by the GATT, Canada will no longer have the right, if it pertains to trade between Canada and the United States, to say no to the GATT decision? Will the Minister answer that, yes or no?

• (1430)

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, may I please point out to the Hon. Member that I was right in my original answer. I was right in the free trade agreement. I am right in saying that he does not have the faintest idea with respect to what he is talking about.