

*Oral Questions*

his arguments, he doesn't leave it up to Canadians to decide one way or another?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** I certainly am confident about our arguments, Mr. Speaker. I am also confident about the responsibility incumbent on our elected representatives to consider a document of this importance and to assess it in terms of our national interest and make the requisite value judgments. I would like to remind the Hon. Member, since he is raising the question, that for instance, as far as Quebec is concerned, since his question was along those lines, the Quebec Premier has endorsed the free trade agreement as being in Quebec's national interest; the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Parizeau, has done so as well; I may remind him . . .

**Mr. Broadbent:** What about producers, farmers, consumers and workers?

**Mr. Mulroney:** . . . and only the New Democrats . . .

**Mr. Broadbent:** Why not call an election?

**Mr. Mulroney:** . . . are against the agreement, while Alain Dubuc wrote in *La Presse*: "With the free trade agreement, Quebec has hit the jackpot". Canada and Quebec have hit the jackpot, and the Leader of the New Democrats is against it!

[English]

## SOCIAL AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, I will direct my question, as well, to the Prime Minister. He has just heard his Minister for International Trade say in the House that in his reading of the Bill there is nothing that will affect social or health programs. It is refreshing to note that someone in the Prime Minister's office has read the agreement and comes to a different conclusion.

Does the Prime Minister support the statement made by Mr. Jeff Norquay, the special adviser to the Prime Minister's office, who, in speaking at a forum in Kitchener on Friday, indicated that there is no guarantee that social and health programs will not be attacked under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement? In fact he went on to say that there is no absolute protection against such programs under this agreement.

Is the Prime Minister's special adviser speaking for the Prime Minister and the Government in saying very clearly that, contrary to all the assertions aside, in fact our social programs, including health clinics, blood clinics, and others, are included as part of the free trade agreement and will be subject to retaliation by the United States? Is Mr. Norquay right or wrong?

**Right Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, as we all know, without the free trade agreement programs can be attacked. It may be by someone in

France, a person in Germany, a person in Canada, or a person in the United States.

Neither this U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement nor any agreement can guarantee Canadians that a particular social program will not be attacked. However, as long as this Government is in office they will be defended vigorously and will not be attacked successfully under the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement because the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement does nothing but promise to create more wealth for Canadians so that we can have more and better social programs. That is what the agreement will do for Canada.

**Mr. Axworthy:** Mr. Speaker, we are not going to get much wealth if it is only a quarter of 1 per cent of growth per year as the Minister's own studies indicate.

## NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, now that the Minister for International Trade has admitted that social programs do not in fact gain any further protection under this agreement, let me ask him about another transgression on the integrity of Canadian programs.

Under Section 137 of the Trade Bill, the National Energy Board will now have complete and total subservience to directives of the Cabinet. Under this Bill the Cabinet will have the power to compel the National Energy Board to issue export licences to U.S. companies, even during times of shortage or when we exhaust our own Canadian resources.

Keeping in mind that very clear abandonment of the rule and responsibility of the National Energy Board, how does the Minister explain the change in government policy which has taken away the independence of the National Energy Board and has, in fact, usurped for Cabinet total control over the regulation and management of energy resources in relation to trade with the United States? How does he explain the total and complete turnover of Canadian policy which has benefited the country for generations?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, I honestly do not know what the hon. gentleman is spluttering about. It is the Government of the country that sets energy policy. It was the last administration which entered into the international energy agreement with other countries under which we assumed certain obligations in connection with the supply of energy and sharing of energy in a crisis.

The National Energy Board will still exist after this legislation is passed but certain rules under which it operates will be changed. It is the right of the elected Members of this House—the hon. gentleman may not believe this because he goes by the unelected House—but it is the right of the elected Members of this House and the Government to set the policy for the National Energy Board, just as was done when the National Energy Program was brought in, trampled upon the provinces of Canada, and beaten over their heads by the hon. gentleman and his colleagues.