

Order Paper Questions

Therefore, they call upon the Government to amend the constitutional accord by entrenching our nation's multicultural heritage and reality as a fundamental characteristic in the opening clause of the Constitution.

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[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, question No. 176 will be answered today.

[Text]

TOBACCO RESTRAINT ACT

Question No. 176—**Mr. McCurdy:**

Since 1970, have any charges been laid under the provisions of the Tobacco Restraint Act, and if so (a) how many (b) how many cases were fines levied?

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): A review of departmental records has indicated no charges under the Tobacco Restraint Act have been laid since 1978. No reliable statistics are available prior to that date.

[Translation]

Mr. McDermid: I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Mr. Speaker: The questions enumerated by the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

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[English]

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S. O. 29**SUSPENSION OF FREE TRADE TALKS**

Mr. Speaker: I must advise Hon. Member that I have received two applications under Standing Order 29 for the adjournment of the House. I will deal with them in the order in which they were received, and first I will call upon the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent).

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 29 to seek leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing the consequences of the collapse of the free trade talks between Canada and the United States.

As of this moment neither the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), nor the Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney), nor the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) has made a statement to the House on this critical matter. Members of Parliament deserve the opportunity to debate the matter fully so that we may understand what are the immediate plans of the Government in terms of these talks and, if they are truly finished, just what alternatives the Government may be pursuing concerning our trade relations with the United States.

If Your Honour so rules that the conditions of Standing Order 29 have been met, I would be happy to move the appropriate motion at the appropriate time.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) has a similar application.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when similar applications under Standing Order 29 were put forward, your comments which I have noted with great care were as follows:

—that the issue is of extreme importance.

You then said:

—it is fair to say that I might be in a better position to consider the matter again after today's proceedings.

That suggests to me that Your Honour was taking proper consideration of what initiatives the Government might take to inform the House and, through the House, the Canadian people on what actions it was purporting to take to respond to what is a very serious crisis facing the country, by the Government's own admission. You, Sir, presided over Oral Question Period both yesterday and today and realize that on a number of very key points the Government has not been prepared to share information with the House.

I think it is of some great indignity to the House that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) when queried in a very straightforward way would refuse to answer, yet outside the House the Director of Communications of his office would then go forward and give answers.

It would seem to me that it is very important that we try to restore the House of Commons as the forum in which important matters of state are examined and discussed and in which a dialogue takes place; not between the Director of Communications and the media. I think that is an unfortunate trend and it is something—

Mr. McDermid: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand that under Standing Order 29 a Member wishing to move such a motion "shall" present without argument the statement referred to.

This sounds like the debate has started, and the Government will not have an opportunity to reply to some of the accusations which have been made.