

Oral Questions

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): Just relax.

Those assurances were put in the Auto Pact in the 1960s because we were not confident then—

Mr. Broadbent: Now you are taking them out.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): We were not confident then of our capacity to win business in this country in competition with other countries.

In the 1980s we on this side of the House have that confidence in the people of Canada to win business against the Americans, against other parties, and that is why we can move into this agreement with confidence that we are moving into the future, not resting in the past.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ELIMINATION OF TARIFFS

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): There is a certain sense of sanctimonious idiocy—

An Hon. Member: Yes, indeed.

Mr. Langdon:—about a Government that has just sold this country out and comes to us to talk about confidence.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): Speaking of confidence, who has confidence in you guys?

Mr. Speaker: The Chair has been fairly patient. Hon. Members will know that a preamble is setting facts upon which to ask a question; it is not only assertions. I would also ask Hon. Ministers when they are answering to direct their minds to the question and not reply by assertions.

Mr. Langdon: I wish to direct my question to the Prime Minister, since he is responsible for this deal. Why is it that he has accepted the elimination of tariffs which will have the effect of stripping away the safeguards which protected and extended the jobs of thousands of auto workers right across Ontario and Quebec? Why that sell-out? Why was it done?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member referred to me as being “sanctimonious”.

An Hon. Member: We want Carney.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): I do not think that I have ever been sanctimonious.

I was trying to demonstrate to the Hon. Member that this Government has the courage, the conviction, the vision, and the understanding of where this country can be—

Mr. Riis: That’s the problem.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):—looking into the future and not into the past.

Mr. de Jong: It’s a nightmare.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre): The Leader of the New Democratic Party asked a question this morning in his remarks, and I listened carefully.

He stated that there is a major question that must be answered—what type of country do we want to have? I think the line was drawn this morning. We have indicated the type of country that we want to have is looking forward into the future—

Mr. Riis: The fifty-first State it’s called.

Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):—and not being mired in the past and all the shibboleths of the past.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—ALLEGED CONTRADICTIONS

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Any Parliament worthy of the name will not tolerate agreements that would put restrictions on the sovereignty it is supposed to maintain. My question is specifically concerned with one major aspect and that is investment. In the documents we received, the section on investment contains some glaring contradictions. For instance, at page 7 of the document—in English—published by the Prime Minister, we read the following:

[*English*]

“Canada retains the right to review the acquisition of firms in Canada by U.S. investors”.

[*Translation*]

In the document published by the United States, we see the following:

[*English*]

“Under this agreement Canada commits to make permanent the present policy of not screening new business investment”.

[*Translation*]

According to the Americans, after the agreement Canada undertakes to maintain its policy not to review American investment. My question to the Prime Minister is: Since this is an agreement signed by two countries, and we seem to have two contradictory versions, who is telling the truth?

[*English*]

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Hon. Member not go to the Americans—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Gauthier: You went there, Mike.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): You don’t trust them?