

Supply

will put investment on the table. That is because it is not on the table, Mr. Speaker. The Americans want to put it on the table, not Canadians. We are quite happy with our open investment climate. Our position, as I have said, is to allow the Americans to put forward what they consider a negotiating proposal. We are not the demanders in this. The Member obviously knows nothing about negotiations. In some areas such as dispute settlement we are the demanders and put the proposal on the table, but where they have an interest they put the proposal on the table.

The Hon. Member referred to bearing witness to the truth and he might live up to his own words. His question was:

Why did the Government not, right at the start, say no to demands that would tie our freedom so completely, demands with respect to holding restrictions on investment which are crucial to jobs in Canada?

As I have indicated, the answer is because we never got such a silly request. The negotiators may have. I do not know what proposals float around over the negotiating table, but they were never ever brought to Cabinet in any way. I, as the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee, have never seen these "unfettered" proposals he has raised.

The Hon. Member has not answered the critical question. Is he against foreign investment in Canada? Is he against new jobs in Canada? Is he against General Motors in Oshawa? When he answers those questions we will be willing to listen to his proposals.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. I will recognize the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) on debate.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, throughout Question Period during this past week one particular burning question has been on everyone's mind. Why is the Government hiding? Why is it up on its tippy-toes dancing around trying to obfuscate and evade? We know why the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) does it. He has all those Gucci shoes in his closet. You need 84 pairs of shoes when you are up on your tippy-toes all the time.

However, why are the Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney), the Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie), and the trade negotiator bumping into one another saying we did not talk about it and we are talking about it? We have just heard the Minister saying with false indignation that everything is an open book. If that is the case, the Minister has no alternative other than to fire the trade negotiator because he has obviously contradicted what she, the Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State have said.

Mr. McDermid: Where?

Mr. Axworthy: The Parliamentary Secretary is asking where. I guess he cannot afford two bits to buy a newspaper. I

will read to him from the *Montreal Gazette* of May 21, 1987. It reads:

Reisman was asked whether refusal to bargain the U.S. demand for removal of investment barriers would scuttle the talks.

"I think I can be very candid with you on that," he told reporters. "I think the United States side has made it very clear at every level—presidential, (cabinet) secretary to secretary, and at the negotiating table, that they are anxious to talk about investment in the broadest sense."

Surely even the Parliamentary Secretary who has been living in the large shadow of the Minister for International Trade so long that he walks in darkness is able to understand that point of view. The chief negotiator has said that the Americans have brought this to the table, their President has brought it to the Prime Minister, their Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of State have brought it to the Ministers. Yet the Government has not yet gotten the message. Can we believe that? Is it possible to believe that the President of the United States, the great prince of persuasion, has said something that the Prime Minister is incapable of understanding?

We can draw two conclusions. The first is that they are so totally incapable of comprehension that to allow them to continue negotiating free trade with such limited powers of comprehension puts us all in peril. The other conclusion is that the chief negotiator is not saying it as it is or the Minister is not saying it as it is, in which case they should get together and decide who is running trade policy in this country.

This is not a trifling item. We are not talking about something of temporary importance. This is a matter that goes to the very heart of the economic management of this country. The question is whether, as a result of the free trade negotiations, the Government of Canada will agree to pay the price of allowing the broadest possible foreign investment in this country without controls, guidelines or any definition as to whether that investment is in our basic interests.

● (1430)

One of the problems concerning the entire free trade negotiation issue is that we hear much about its benefits but nothing about the price we will have to pay for those benefits. We do not hear that these negotiations may result in Canadians losing their freedom of choice in all areas of public policy, federal and provincial. We do not hear about Canadians losing the right to decide what kind of country we want.

The investment issue is crucial because it dramatizes exactly the price we may have to pay. That is why we must pay attention to this issue and that is why it has dominated Question Period for four days. We want some answers as to whether the Government will indeed be paying that kind of price in order to modify the U.S. trade remedy laws. Will it allow the United States to have total access to foreign investment, as Mr. Reisman says they want, and as the Americans indicated in their own report last fall? Their primary demand is for a policy of investment based upon the principle of national treatment, which means there are no rules