

UNITED NATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS' EXPENDITURES—STRICTER ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations, more particularly certain of its agencies such as the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, do not always work in the way intended. To put it mildly, the degree of professionalism in their operation and management is not what we would expect, for instance, in the Public Service of Canada.

● (1415)

Canada is correct in demanding accountability for the funds being spent, if for no other reason than that we are a major financial contributor, and Canadian taxpayers have the right to know, for instance, how wisely their \$40 million donation to the FAO is being spent.

The assistance of Canadian financial experts in straightening out the books of the United Nations will be appreciated by those countries which, like ourselves, insist that public funds be properly used and properly accounted for.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENT—PROVINCIAL POWERS TO SET ENERGY PRICES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last evening the former Premier of Alberta, now one of the most strident and strong advocates of the proposed trade arrangement with the Americans, said unequivocally that one of the consequences of the proposed agreement will be that the provinces will lose their responsibility and right to determine prices for consumers and industry.

How can the Government go ahead with an agreement which so substantially erodes the powers of the provinces and the rights of Canadian consumers, without any consultation or agreement with the provinces? How can the Government take such a major stand which changes the jurisdiction of the country without any agreement from the parties involved?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Hon. Member that the free trade agreement in no way alters the constitutional authority of the provinces in the field of natural resources.

The Hon. Member talks about the lack of consultation. I point out that the Premier of Alberta was present at seven or eight First Ministers Conferences where this subject was discussed at length. In addition, the former Premier of Alberta said that the free trade agreement was a "win, win" situation

Oral Questions

for all of Canada and would create jobs and investment for all regions of the country.

POSITION OF FORMER ALBERTA PREMIER

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I was not quoting my own words but the very clear and unmistakable statement made by that former Premier which the Tory benches have just applauded. He said that, based upon his consultations with the Government and his reading of the agreement, the powers of the provinces are now totally limited. They will no longer have the power to set prices and will no longer have the power to give their consumers or industries any preferential advantage.

Is the Minister for International Trade contradicting the former Premier of Alberta who says that he knows something about energy? Is that what she is doing?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Of course not, Mr. Speaker. The provinces, as I have said, have full rights to deal with their resources within the Constitution. They have full rights to set royalties, to regulate, to conserve, and to manage their resources. It has not been the practice of provinces to set consumer prices rather than royalties.

Mr. Axworthy: Oh, really?

Miss Carney: There has not normally been a need for a province to do that unless it has been faced with programs such as the National Energy Program established by the Member's Government, which forced Alberta to sell below market prices, at great loss to the Province and the people of Alberta.

FORTHCOMING MEETING OF FIRST MINISTERS

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, it is going to come as a great surprise to the Provinces of Alberta, Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba, which have all used preferential prices to provide comparative advantage to establish industry for economic development purposes and which have provided special pricing for consumers, that the Minister for International Trade does not even know that those practices have been put in place. That is an example of just how ignorant the Minister is of provincial rights.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: How can we go ahead and hold a First Ministers meeting next week at which a very fundamental right of the provinces will be eliminated when the provinces will not even have access to the final draft? They will not know what is in the text and they have a Minister who does not know what she is talking about.

● (1420)

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McDermid: What a lousy leadership speech that was.