

Oral Questions

I am delighted with the support my colleagues have given to supporting the Canadian book publishing industry in making this important contribution to the unity and the strength of Canadian culture.

• (1440)

Mr. Speaker: In recognizing the hon. member, I know that she will want to put her next question through the Chair to the minister.

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): I am terribly sorry, Mr. Speaker. Through you to the minister, I just thought the minister would like to know that the Canadian culture policy was supposed to be off the table, not under the table. People are not exactly happy, as the minister would like to have us think.

Our television and radio industries were built through decisions of successive governments to limit foreign ownership of broadcasting in Canada in the sixties. Now in the nineties, will the government have the political will to apply the same measures and recover and ensure a book publishing policy for Canada in the Canadian interest?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, my hon friend says that people are not enthusiastic about it. All I know is what I read in the press and it is always accurate. The *Edmonton Journal* of January 29 states "Publishers give Beatty rave review"; the *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 29, "Publishers hail protection and money injection".

We have one goal and that is to strengthen the cultural fabric of Canada. The measures which we took in the course of the past week will do precisely that by creating conditions in which Canadians will be encouraged to take over the book publishing industry in this country. There will be support to ensure that Canadian authors can get published and that Canadians will find that there are Canadian books available to read.

I think when the hon. member publishes her first book, she will be grateful for that, even perhaps when she buys her first book, she will be grateful for it.

TRADE

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade I have a question for the Prime Minister.

All Canadians participated prior to the last election in an intense debate about the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Currently there are negotiations between Canada, U.S. and Mexico and no intense debate.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he is prepared to present to this House a draft of the Mexican-Canada-U.S. agreement, if such a draft exists, so that this House has the privilege of debating what this government may be committing us to.

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, the government has made it clear to the House many times what our objectives are. Let me just repeat them: in the NAFTA negotiations, improved access to a very growing and important market, the Mexican market; improved access to the U.S. in areas such as government procurement and financial services; greater access to North American, including Mexican inputs, to permit Canadians to compete better in world markets and also strengthening ourselves as a preferred site for domestic and foreign investment; safeguard mechanisms to protect our industries under a new trading arrangement; finally, a fair, transparent and expeditious dispute settlement mechanism.

All of these are very worthy goals and we are very proud to pursue them.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister if he was prepared to place in front of this House a draft of the Canada-U.S.-Mexico free trade agreement. Such a draft does exist and it is being kept secret from this House.

I would like to ask the minister to explain why in a phone call, Ms. Pat Norman, the press secretary to Carla Hills, acknowledged to my staff today that such a draft exists and has already been made available to Mexican senators to discuss in their caucus before it goes to the chamber. I have also spoken to the press secretary, Mr. Rosenzwaig, of the Canadian Embassy in Mexico. He confirms that a draft bracketed treaty has been made