

## Oral Questions

## TRADE

## CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—PLYWOOD EXPORTS

I say to the Hon. Member very clearly that if she is asking that standards be imposed by the federal Government, that was done neither by her Government nor by any other Government. They were national objectives—

**Ms. Copps:** False, false.

**Mr. Epp (Provencher):** The Hon. Member for Hamilton East is as uninformed on this issue as any other issue on which she has been uninformed.

**Mrs. Pépin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Minister that I was discussing accessibility for all Canadian children, and the former Minister of National Health and Welfare got five national standards.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is addressed to the same Minister. We still have no answer as to what will constitute the minimum standard of care in this so-called child care program. There are no guidelines in the law. There is an obvious abdication of responsibility as to what aspects, if any, of child care will have to meet minimum standards, whether it will be the training of child care workers or merely administrative skills.

● (1430)

How can the Government guarantee these minimum standards without specifying in the law what aspects of child care will have to meet such standards? Will the minimum standards be left entirely to negotiation with the provinces? Is that the Minister's vision of a fair public policy for our children?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is wrong. There are not national standards in the Canada Health Act. There are five objectives. In fact, if she will talk to former Cabinet Ministers in her Party she will learn that the former Minister of Health tried to get standards and was not able constitutionally to do so. Therefore, we are left with the situation of having objectives rather than standards in the Canada Health Act.

Second, we have principles. We have the principles of 200,000 spaces, and a cost-sharing arrangement, as well as the agreements with the provincial Governments.

Finally, the Member says that there should be national standards with respect to training. I point out to her that teachers, lawyers, and pharmacists hold provincial licences. She knows that as does every Member of the House. She is trying to score a political point which does not exist constitutionally in Canada.

We will have agreements with the provinces and I trust that the provinces will want standards which meet public criteria.

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a question with the Minister for International Trade who last month indicated that he and his Government had protested the plan of the United States to stop plywood exports going into that country despite the terms of the trade deal which had been signed.

The United States administration has now put its Act before Congress and that Act contains precisely that attempt to stop our plywood exports unilaterally.

What does the Minister intend to do in response to this slap in the face to the Canadian people and to himself personally?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, as usual of course, is exaggerating the situation. I did not hear the hon. gentleman announce that he was pleased by the fact that several changes had been made in the U.S. legislation. For example, an obnoxious provision that the Canadian provinces should be looked to for their concurrence with the agreement has been removed. An obnoxious provision which requires that lobsters comply with U.S. size requirements has been removed.

There have been several improvements, but the hon. gentleman always looks on the gloomy side. He cannot see anything good in life at all and I feel sorry for him in that respect.

With regard to the plywood situation, it is an attempt by the Americans to get better access for their plywood in Canada. It is not the other way around. Unfortunately, there has been a disagreement between us as to whether U.S. plywood meets the requirements set by CMHC. CMHC did an evaluation with which the United States is not satisfied. We have set up a panel of experts to test Canadian and U.S. standards to see whether they can come to an agreement on whether U.S. and Canadian standards should or can be the same.

In the meantime the U.S. is proceeding in a way which, in our view, would be a violation of the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement once it goes into effect. If that is the case, when it goes into effect we will proceed either to withdraw concessions or to dispute resolution in connection with that.

**Mr. Langdon:** So in fact, Mr. Speaker, we will start this great new era of trade relations with the United States with a trade war. What nonsense, what absolute nonsense.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## REQUEST THAT MINISTER PROTEST

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Mr. Speaker, now is the time to protest. Now is the time to start shouting at Americans, not at Canadians. Now is the time to try to get