

Supply

Mr. Axworthy:—when our negotiator has said these matters have already been brought forward at the highest levels? These representations have already been made.

I ask the Minister, have the U.S. President and these other officials brought this matter to the Prime Minister and other cabinet Ministers? Is Cabinet aware of the Americans' intentions? When the representations were made did the Government say no?

Miss Carney: Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Hon. Member to prove that any member of this Government and Cabinet were in any way contradicting each other on this issue.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Obviously you were away.

Miss Carney: Let me just repeat what the Secretary of State for External Affairs said today in Question Period because I was across the street hosting the Cairns group. He said what I have said, that the Americans have indicated an interest in discussing investment. I said that in the House. I quoted from the record. I just said it again. He said we are prepared to consider those specific proposals once we have received them in final form. That is what I have said. He said at the last meeting the negotiators indicated there was an oral indication, not written, that the U.S. negotiator was interested in some details, but it does not go anywhere near the false impression fostered by the two opposition Parties on "full" and "unfettered access" to Canada.

The Right Hon. Minister also said when we have a concrete idea of what the Americans are interested in discussing it will be considered by Cabinet. He added that if they are acceptable and in the interests of Canada we are prepared to give our negotiator a mandate to negotiate. That is what we have done in other areas. That will not conclude the matter because Cabinet will retain the right to approve or reject and indeed oversee anything which might be discussed by the negotiator at the table.

As I pointed out, these things are all talked through with the provinces. If they are not acceptable to Canada we are not prepared to negotiate on that basis. The Right Hon. Member also said we intend to retain protection for vital Canadian interests as was made clear by myself and the Prime Minister.

I think if the Hon. Member checks that summary of the Minister's reply in Question Period against my reply and the record he will find that our Ministers have all been singing from the same song sheet and we are not singing bewitched, bothered and bewildered.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister is not singing that song but she is certainly performing it in mime, it seems to me.

• (1420)

I want to turn to what the Minister replied to me earlier this week when I asked her the very straight question:

Why has the Cabinet not said a flat no to the attempt of the United States to widen this discussion about investment beyond trade related investment?

Her answer at that time was:

—that the kind of question the Hon. Member is suggesting has never been put to us.

She did not say it has never been put to us in writing, she did not say it has never been put to us by the President of the United States in detail, she did not say it has never been put to us in detailed terms. She said it has never been put to us. That is a direct contradiction to what she has said today, which indicates that those positions were indeed put to us orally by the United States trade negotiator. Indeed, they have been put to us by many others including the United States Trade Commissioner, George Shultz, and the President, as indicated in every report we read in the press.

I suggest that the Minister must bear witness to the truth. She must respect the truth and clearly reflect the truth in answering questions or she will lose completely the very limited trust of the Canadian people which she still has.

The quotation I used comes directly from *Hansard* and perhaps the Associate Minister of National Defence (Mr. Dick) would like to check it. It is found on page 6241 of *Hansard* of May 20, 1987, and reflects exactly what I have just read into the record.

I want to make two points. First, the Minister, unfortunately, because she was not here for the thrust of our critique, has not dealt with the points which made up the supporting basis for my speech. Most important, I want to ask the Minister the question which has been our basic question throughout this week. Why is the Government permitting the United States continually to take the initiative with respect to this subject? Why have we not put forward our position with respect to extending this discussion beyond trade related investment? Why, from our perspective, has the Government not said no? If the Government does not wish to say no, why has it not been prepared to say what we believe should be extended with reference to investment?

The point is that the Minister has continually allowed the other side to take the initiative in these discussions and we as a country are losing. We are worse off as a consequence.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated but I will allow the Hon. Minister to answer succinctly.

Miss Carney: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to answer that kind of outpouring of rhetoric but I will concentrate on a couple of points. The Hon. Member said that I was not here to answer their criticisms in this area. I was in Quebec City meeting with provincial Trade Ministers yesterday. Last night, today and tomorrow I am meeting with international Trade Ministers. I am sorry that that is not considered by them to be the proper conduct of my duties.

Second, he asks why we did not run to the table and ask the Americans to please put investment on the table and then we