

Oral Questions

In 1983 the Secretary of State for External Affairs, who is presently a member of Cabinet, opposed this type of deal. The Minister of Finance, who was here just a moment ago, opposed this deal, and the former Secretary of State, who is not with us, opposed this deal. The Prime Minister himself said in 1983 that he would have nothing to do with such a proposal because the sovereignty of Canada would be affected.

My question is very straightforward. Instead of proceeding before the election with an Act that goes against everything these Ministers said in 1983, will the Government not do the right thing and resign now and have an election on this important issue?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, if there were better alternatives than the one that has been proposed—and we certainly do not hear them from either of the opposition Parties—then we would certainly consider those alternatives. The fact of the matter is that we know what they are against, but we do not know what they are for.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, the Government does not know what other people are for because it gave up listening to Canadians a long time ago, whether in the House or anywhere else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

FREE TRADE—REQUEST FOR GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, if we look at the Province of Quebec, the *Association des consommateurs québécois* is against the agreement, the *Union des producteurs agricoles* is against the agreement, Quebec's workers are all against the agreement. Why not call an election right away on this very important issue?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member says that the Government has stopped listening to Canadians. The Hon. Leader of the NDP is not even prepared to listen to the free vote of his own Members of Parliament. He is standing up here in the House today condemning the Government for bringing in a proposition that would allow all Members to express themselves freely. Why the hypocrisy?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

POSITION OF GOVERNMENT

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, as is usual, when the Government gets a question it does not like on

one subject it changes the subject instead of answering the question. That is typical.

The day that this Government will deal in a straightforward way with the question of abortion as it did with capital punishment, then it will get the response of my Party. But instead of abiding by the rules of Parliament this Government wants to break the rules. That is what the Government is doing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The focus of the question seems to have shifted. Perhaps the Hon. Minister would respond.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the principles remain the same even though the subject matter may differ. All I am asking the Leader of the New Democratic Party is to apply the same principle to one issue as he does to another.

As a matter of fact he said we should do the same thing we did with capital punishment. We had a free vote on capital punishment, and we will have a free vote on abortion.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

COST OF DRUGS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. On January 25 in the House the Minister said:

—in Canada all senior citizens are covered by drug plans. In Canada, no one goes without drugs for lack of money. Everyone on welfare receives drugs.

I have a letter here from a lady in Cochrane, Ontario, who states:

I am a fifty-five year old woman with angina . . . I'm not supposed to work; but had to take a part-time job to pay for my pills. When I started to take "Cardizem", the price was a little over \$44.00; now the price is \$93.89—soon . . . I won't be able to pay for them with what I make.

● (1430)

Who, Mr. Minister, will pay for this lady's life-saving drugs?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I may be wrong, but I was of the opinion that the Government of Ontario did have medical health support programs for its citizens. I would presume that the Liberal Government of Ontario would try and ensure that none of its citizens went without life-saving drugs.

Since the Hon. Member mentions Cardizem, it should be pointed out that the medicinal value of that drug is saving the lives of approximately 5,000 Canadians a year, is a result of research conducted in Montreal by Canadian researchers.