

aids, Senator Murray turns to Senator Simard and Senator Simard answers the question.

Senator Simard: In that case I was asking a question.

Senator Frith: I want it noted that Senator Simard is taking notes, and I want it understood that we are too.

Senator Simard: Are you prepared to run in that election?

● (1420)

Senator Frith: What we might call a member of their shadow cabinet is now making a suggestion that we should have an election. We are asking, and these Canadians have been asking, week after week, month after month, almost year after year, for an election, and Senator Simard says that they are considering it. Let's hear it for Senator Simard.

Now we come to the petitions which to his benefit and credit, always attract the attention of Senator Simard. When the people speak, Senator Simard listens.

The list of cities on the petitions from Quebec are Amos, Chambly, Charlesbourg, Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Iberville, Kirkland, LaPrairie, Longueuil, Montréal, Pierrefonds, Repentigny, Rouyn, St-Ambroise, St-Côme, St-Hubert, St-Lien, Ste-Geneviève, Sherbrooke, Val d'Or; from New Brunswick, Bas Caraquet, Burnt Church, Caraquet, Evangeline, Le Goulet, Moncton, Paquetville, St-John, St-Léolin, Shippagan, Village Blanchard; and from Ontario, Kapuskasing.

In total, we have from the province of Quebec 23 petitions with 486 names; New Brunswick, 25 petitions with 103 names, and Ontario, one petition with 20 names. We have a total of 29 petitions with 609 signatures.

[Translation]

Hon. Jacques Hébert: Honourable senators, I too have the honour to present petitions signed by 20 citizens of Pokesudie, New Brunswick who oppose the goods and services and also demand elections as soon as possible.

I also have the honour to present petitions that come from the province of Ontario, mainly from Toronto, Oshawa, Little Britain, Whitby, Ajax, Pickering, Cobourg, Bowmanville and Port Perry, for a grand total of 1,045 signatures. They are all Canadians who, like Senator Frith, are counting the days until deliverance!

QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

DRAFT TEXT—VULNERABILITY OF CANADIAN INDUSTRIES TO U.S. AND MEXICAN INTERESTS

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I wish to ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate about the NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement negotiations, and the drafts that we have not been

privileged to see. I ask him if he would go on the record and tell us whether it is true that the following statements or matters are dealt with in this way in the draft material to date: Leaving our textile industry vulnerable. Would that be a fair description of the drafts to date?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): No, honourable senators.

Senator Frith: I would like the Leader of the Government to be on record on all of these questions. Another statement is that it opens up the Canadian telecommunications industry to the United States and Mexican interests?

Senator Murray: No, honourable senators. We have no intention of opening the Canadian telecommunications market beyond what is now allowed.

Senator Frith: Land transportation services?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, the honourable senator could go through every item that he has found in the *Toronto Star* and ask me to comment. I do not think that is a very productive way to proceed. Let me just tell him that there was a draft sometime in December. That draft has been evolving in the meantime as discussions continue among the three parties. One thing that is quite inaccurate to suggest is that there is any agreement. There is no agreement until there is an agreement.

Senator Frith: Honourable senators will not be surprised that the Leader of the Government and I do not agree on what is productive. That is an interesting choice of words, incidentally, because it is production exactly that we are interested in. Let me ask him, then, if he can comment on why we are giving away negotiating cards such as the card that we might have had and that will be dealt away by Mr. Epp's anticipated announcement about the energy sector, similar to the mistake we made prior to the FTA negotiations when we dismantled FIRA and the NEP?

● (1430)

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, the premise to the question is inaccurate and, therefore, the question itself is academic.

Senator Frith: The premise being the giving away of cards?

Senator Murray: Yes, honourable senators.

Senator Frith: Apparently there is nothing in the agreement on the environment, a labour code, or employment standards. Are our Canadian textile workers expected—by our negotiators—to compete with Mexican manufacturers who need worry little about polluting the environment, and whose workers earn \$1 dollar an hour and who live in orange crates, or so we are told?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, Mexico's exports of textiles to Canada are currently very low. Indeed, our whole trade with Mexico is not very great in quantitative terms. We do as much trade with North Carolina as we do with Mexico.

As far as textiles or anything else is concerned, if there is a trilateral agreement, that agreement in all the sectors that we