

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Trudeau:** Well no, Mr. Speaker. The provincial parties, whether in Quebec, in Alberta or in British Columbia, naturally offer a provincial point of view, and that is not only their right, but also in their interest. On the other hand, the federal government—and I would have thought that the opposition would agree—offers a national point of view. That is what we attempted to do by saying: Of course this tax comes under provincial jurisdiction. We want to cut federal taxes, which we can very well do in our sphere of responsibility, but for once let us try to do so jointly. We acted jointly with nine out of ten provinces, the tenth having failed to reply. So the federal government cannot be accused of refusing to negotiate. It was Mr. Parizeau who let the nine other provinces and the federal government arrive at an agreement which was acceptable to all and who then said: Now that everyone has had his turn, I have something else to say. We will continue to negotiate with him. I repeat, the federal government will take the necessary action so that Quebec taxpayers do not lose a cent because of Mr. Parizeau's desire to make federalism impossible.

● (1442)

[English]

CANADIAN POSITION AT GATT NEGOTIATIONS

**Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, I got off my sick bed to come here, so I cannot shout.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Crosbie:** I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

**An hon. Member:** Speak up.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for St. John's West.

**Mr. Crosbie:** In the minister's recent budget he continued certain tariff reductions that were made in 1972 by Mr. Turner, who made these reductions on grounds that he wanted to wrestle the cost of inflation to the ground. The minister continued in his recent budget of 1978. Could the minister tell us, did he get any *quid pro quo*, or did his colleagues attempt to get any *quid pro quo* from the nations negotiating at Geneva in this GATT round for his continuation of these cuts, which he was not required to do? Did we get any *quid pro quo* in return?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, we take into account all factors in the negotiations. Those cuts are on a temporary basis for Canada, they are not permanent, so they are still part of the package which we can offer at the Geneva negotiations. I think the hon. member can now go back to his bed.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Mr. Speaker, I will not tell the minister and the government where they should go; that is obvious.

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

[Mr. Graffey.]

**Mr. Crosbie:** In connection with these tariff reductions, one industry, the coffin and casket industry—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Crosbie:**—had its tariff reduced from 22.5 per cent to 15 per cent. Has the minister received any representations because, as a result, 300 jobs have been lost and there has been a large increase in the number of coffins and caskets imported—for the government, probably, after the next election—and will he consider some additional protection for industries such as this which manufacture here in Canada?

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, if we look at the people in this House who have tended to encourage that type of operation, caskets, in the last 15 years in the House I think they have bought many more than we have bought. I have not received any specific recommendation from the hon. member or otherwise.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Just try to get into a Japanese casket and see how you like it.

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CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO IMPROVE GRAIN HANDLING

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a couple of questions to the Minister of Transport, who is also in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board, regarding our future prospects for grain movement and sales. The United States Department of Agriculture foreign magazine of yesterday says that Canada, which is China's largest traditional supplier, is experiencing transportation tie-ups in moving grain for export, and that in any event Canada may not be in a position to supply the import needs of the People's Republic of China through November of 1978.

Is there any accuracy in that statement by the United States Department of Agriculture? If so, what measures is the minister taking to increase grain movement and grain supply of the grades and kinds which are wanted by the Canadian Wheat Board and by the Chinese, and will he be recommending to prairie grain producers that they maximize their seeding acreages this spring?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, the nature of our very large sales did lead us on March 1 to indicate to farmers the great opportunities there were for them to produce wheat, Durum and other grains. It is true that the selling program of the Canadian Wheat Board has advanced so far that it has not very much more space for sales, having regard to supplies as well as transportation and port facilities.

In setting a likely record of, for example, 850 million bushels for export this year we may be getting close to what we