

Oral Questions

free trade agreement with the United States, and that is Canada.

An Hon. Member: So far!

Mr. Axworthy: Therefore, we are the only country to which these new powers will apply. I appeal to the Minister. As the Minister responsible for defending Canadian interests, he knows full well that Section 31 gives the U.S. trade office new powers. It will be monitoring exports to determine all the subsidies. It will be able to take unilateral action against those subsidies on the government level, not relying upon industry petitions.

Those are substantial new powers that are not in the U.S. trade law now. They are not in our laws. They are brand new. They will provide severe and very harsh new constraints upon Canadian exports. I don't understand why the Minister refuses to stand up for Canadian interests.

He has a Bill in front of the House. That Bill could be clearly amended simply to parallel, if he wants, what the Americans are doing to us. If we are supposed to have reciprocity, why don't we at least have reciprocity in protecting Canadian interests? Why are this Government and this Minister refusing to stand up for Canada once again?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, every time the Opposition cries wolf, we are not going to respond "bah bah" as the hon. gentleman wants us to do. This is ridiculous. Just because the Hon. Member says something is so, doesn't make it so. I am going to read what the clause says:

An entity can make a complaint to the United States Trade Representative if the industry is likely to face increased competition from subsidized imports, with which it directly competes, from any other country designated by the President following consultation with the Congress as benefiting from a reduction of tariffs or other trade barriers under a trade agreement that enters into force after January 1, 1989.

Mr. Axworthy: It sounds like Canada. It sounds like us.

Mr. Crosbie: There is no point shouting when I am trying to answer the question. I will shout you if I have to.

Mr. Axworthy: We know that. That's all you can do.

Mr. Crosbie: What this means is that this applies not just to Canada but to any country that benefits from a reduction of tariffs or other trade barriers under a trade agreement. That could be the MTN agreement or any other trade agreement that lowers barriers with the United States after this Act comes into force. So it does not apply just to Canada.

In any event, the hon. gentleman is completely wrong as usual, wrong-headed and wrong.

APPLICATION OF UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN LAW

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister for International Trade. In the Bill agreed to

yesterday by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, they have kept in Article 3, the provision that says: "In the event of a conflict between U.S. law and the agreement, U.S. law shall prevail". In our Bill, Article 8 states that our Bill will override every other Canadian law whenever there is a conflict. How can the Minister tolerate such a flagrant difference between our law and their law? Is he now prepared to amend our law and either take out Article 8 altogether or make it the same as the American provision?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, there is another little wolf on the wolf's hind legs again.

Mr. Axworthy: Forget the insults, John. You're an absolute failure as a Minister.

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. sheep is pretending to be a wolf. That is the difference.

Mr. Axworthy: Stand up for this country, you big fraud!

Mr. Crosbie: You couldn't even gum anyone to death.

With respect to the question, this is a question of statutory drafting. Clause 8 of our Bill, which states that the Bill would override any inconsistent provision in other Bills relating to the same subject matter, is a common piece of statutory drafting in Canada. That kind of clause appears in many of our federal statutes.

In the United States there is a congressional system, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, but hon. gentlemen opposite have difficulty in grasping that. They have a President and they have a Congress which is independent of the President. The Congress doesn't trust the President, therefore, their habit is to say—

Mr. Foster: We don't trust you so it is all the same.

Mr. Orlikow: We don't trust you.

Mr. Crosbie: And the Canadian public doesn't trust any of you. That is why you are where you are and we are where we are.

Some Hon. Members: Let's go! Let's go!

Mr. Crosbie: We are going to have an election, don't you worry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Supplementary, the Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East.

REQUEST THAT LEGISLATION BE AMENDED

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, this is not just a drafting provision. This is a matter of substance. Clause 8 in our law, Bill C-130, makes the Canadian-U.S. Free Trade Agreement in Canada sort of a quasi-constitution subject only to the Constitution of Canada, but able to override every other Canadian law whenever there