

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**CANADIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY**

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian sugar industry is very happy with the recent trade ruling by the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, which confirmed that dumped sugar from the U.S. and subsidized sugar from the European Union is threatening material injury to the industry.

• (1415)

The industry is also pleased that the United States has decided to exempt sugar from the Helms bill, which would have placed serious implications on Canada's ability to export sugar.

All this being said, the Canadian sugar industry still has one very key irritant that needs to be resolved. Canadian sugar exports to the U.S. were drastically reduced last year when the Americans implemented new trade restrictions which lowered our export quota. As a result, the Lantic Sugar refinery in Saint John, New Brunswick, had to lay off many employees. These tariffs are estimated to cost many hundreds of Canadian jobs in the sugar industry.

As an Atlantic Canadian, I call on the minister of trade to finish the job and continue to enter into formal negotiations with the U.S.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[Translation]

**THE CONSTITUTION**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the Prime Minister backed out of the promises he made to Quebecers six days before the referendum and said that reopening the Constitution was out of the question, Quebecers all remembered the promises made by Pierre Elliott Trudeau on May 14, 1980, promises on which the government at the time immediately proceeded to renege.

Since six days before the referendum the Prime Minister clearly referred to the Constitution as a way to bring about change, does yesterday's retreat signify that Quebecers have been tricked once again as they were in 1980, when they were promised so-called satisfactory constitutional changes and the government did not deliver?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** On the contrary, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister's statement in Verdun on October 24 was as follows, and I quote; "We will keep open all the other roads to change, including administrative and constitutional means. Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the

consent of Quebecers", while the Leader of the Opposition said, and I quote: "While he talks about the Constitution, we will look after jobs".

[English]

When asked whether he would sign any deal he said: "No, it is not possible. I am a sovereignist". The person who is off the wall on this is not the Prime Minister; it is the Leader of the Opposition.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is a fine way of passing the buck. This government blames unemployment on the previous government, and when there are problems with the Constitution, it blames them on the opposition.

When the Prime Minister made these promises to Quebec a few days before the referendum, he knew there was a sovereignist government in Quebec City. He knew that perfectly well. He made certain promises. So how can he use the sovereignist government in Quebec City as an excuse to back out of the promises he made so he will not have to deliver the goods?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the promises made by the Prime Minister, which will be kept, and I quote: "We will keep open all the other roads to change, including administrative and constitutional means. Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the consent of Quebecers".

If anyone is saying no, it is not the Prime Minister but the Leader of the Opposition, who the day after the referendum dismissed the option of constitutional change.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** How delightful, Mr. Speaker. What is the world coming to? Now for my question, and I hope we manage to understand each other.

The Prime Minister of Canada—not Joe Blow but the Prime Minister—comes to Quebec six days before a referendum. Without anyone asking, he promises the changes the Deputy Prime Minister just mentioned.

• (1420)

And then we have the same Prime Minister, and since I am going to quote him, I will quote exactly what he said two days after the referendum in this House: "This I have promised and this I will do". And yesterday, he told us: "I will not do it". What is going on?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary. The Prime Minister promised, and I quote: "Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the consent of Quebecers".