

Oral Questions

Prairies and elsewhere, auto workers, cultural industries and investment levels in this country. As it was not discussed in a single speech in the last election campaign, would the Prime Minister do the proper, democratic thing and go to the people of Canada to seek a mandate for this before he signs it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Riis: How confident are you now?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to call an election—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Now, now!

Mr. Mulroney:—but it might inconvenience some people in the House.

Mr. Broadbent: Look behind you.

Mr. Riis: There are some pretty glum faces behind you. You scared those people behind you.

Mr. Mulroney: The enthusiasm for my hon. friend's proposition should be considered by all Members of the House.

• (1430)

We campaigned on a program of economic renewal. That program mentioned very specifically enhancement of trade, bilaterally and multinationally. That program has created over 900,000 new jobs, and we plan to create hundreds of thousands more. Then we will have an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

REQUEST FOR GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, we believe this agreement is a bad one for farmers, for remote areas, for our culture and for investment control. If the Prime Minister wants to be really democratic, why doesn't he call an election right away?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the agreement reflects—in fact, it deals with the issue to which the Hon. Member was referring, with problems specific to Quebec, for instance. The Premier of Quebec, Mr. Bourassa, has declared that according to him, the proposed agreement means significant gains for Quebec, for Canadian unity and for Canada's integrity. That is the opinion of the Premier of Quebec, who is as concerned about Quebec and Canadian issues as my hon. friend. The Hon. Member is calling for an election. We shall see what happens between now and later today.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mulroney: I can inform him that the Canadian Government, as the Minister of Finance just mentioned, has already created more than 900,000 jobs. The proposed free trade treaty provides for several hundred thousand new jobs, and I believe that finalizing these negotiations is truly in the interests of Canadians and Quebecers.

[*English*]

REQUEST FOR GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, we believe that if this agreement is acted upon by the Government of Canada in conjunction with the United States it will have absolutely disastrous consequences for the future of Canada.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): That is what you said about the Auto Pact. Have you ever been right, Ed?

Mr. Broadbent: Considering that the Prime Minister himself has said that this is one of the largest deals in Canadian history—indeed in world history—and considering it does fly in the face, in our judgment, of everything Sir John A. Macdonald, John Diefenbaker, and other Canadian Prime Ministers who were interested in the sovereignty of this nation stood for, I repeat: will the Prime Minister do the proper and democratic thing and go to the people of Canada and defend what he says he believes in?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I noted with interest that my hon. friend referred to the free trade agreement as “absolutely disastrous”. That is exactly what the NDP said about the Auto Pact 22 years ago.

Mr. Broadbent: No, it is not.

Mr. Mulroney: Inasmuch as my hon. friend is engaging his credibility as a prophet, I would remind my hon. colleagues in the House that when the Minister of Finance brought in his first Budget my hon. friend predicted that it would result in the loss of between 50,000 and 100,000 jobs. It created hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

Mr. Broadbent: What are you afraid of? Go to the people.

Mr. Mulroney: My hon. friend asks me to call an election. I can assure my hon. friend that when I do he will wish I hadn't.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

CANADA-UNITED STATES AUTO PACT

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister speaks of the Auto Pact. It is clear from looking at the document he tabled in the House this morning that the Government has broken its promise not to allow the Auto Pact to be part of the free trade negotiations. This document shows, Mr. Speaker, that the present requirement for 60 per cent Canadian content on cars and parts sold in Canada by United States-based