

Oral Questions

tary purpose of examining the question the Hon. Member raises, and many other questions.

Ms. Jewett: Why bother?

Mr. Nielsen: The world does not stand still while the parliamentary process continues.

Ms. Jewett: This is a mockery.

Mr. Nielsen: The Government has to govern. I know that he and members of his Party have an extremely difficult time in coming to grips with the parliamentary process.

Mr. Broadbent: Come off it.

Mr. Nielsen: I urge the Hon. Member in this instance to have his Party participate in that process in the examination of the Green Paper.

BILATERAL TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Why should we shore up a lame duck committee?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Who do you plan putting on the committee?

Mr. Deans: Let me ask the Deputy Prime Minister a question on a related topic contained in the report. Will the Deputy Prime Minister at least acknowledge that on the question of bilateral trade with the United States there is already in place a mechanism, including the Minister of Trade in Canada and his equivalent in the United States who are to report to the heads of the two countries within six months? Will he, therefore, acknowledge that a further study in Canada of bilateral trade could not be completed within six months? Will the Deputy Prime Minister undertake on behalf of the Government not to complete any bilateral trade agreements until this committee has reported to Parliament?

• (1440)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I find that an extremely negative approach, but it is not an unusual one for that Member and the members of his Party to take. What he is suggesting is that there is no need in the next six months to do everything we possibly can to enhance our trade relations, not only with the United States but with other countries of the world as well. Certainly trade is addressed in the Green Paper because it is one of the most important matters with respect to our competitiveness as a nation. Surely this is the kind of thing which he and members of his Party should be discussing in the discussions which will be going on in the special committee.

[Translation]

TRADE

PROPOSED FREE TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the answers given by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence, I am ever more convinced that it had to be the best world junket organized for frustrated Progressive Conservative Members—at taxpayers' expense to boot.

Seeking evidence to the contrary, I would ask the Minister for International Trade—used as he is to being pushed aside by the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, as he was again yesterday by the Secretary of State for External Affairs—how he can reconcile his recent country-wide consultation tour about free trade with the United States with the fact that, being now totally ignored by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, he is seeking public approval to appear a second time before a parliamentary committee, with photocopies and all.

[English]

Hon. James Kelleher (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the hon. gentleman that I am standing here on my own two feet and that I am not being pushed aside by anyone.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kelleher: I would further like to advise the Hon. Member that I work in very close consultation and partnership with my colleagues, the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and that the trade discussions are continuing with full consultation with the Canadian public.

[Translation]

CONSULTATION WITH CANADIAN PEOPLE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

There is no need for the Minister to tell me that he stands on his own two feet, I also know he is performing a balancing act between the two Ministers involved. He is telling me that there is ongoing full consultation with the Canadian people. Can he explain why he ordered renewed full-scale consultations yesterday since we know he wants to begin negotiations with the United States before this fall? He and the Prime Minister have assured us that negotiations will begin before the Fall. Can the Minister tell me whether he will wait for the committee report before initiating those consultations, or are his own consultations the real ones and the others a mere make-believe exercise? Which are real and which are phony?