

Oral Questions

further powers of harassment, and further powers of retaliatory action. With all those new trade powers, is it not true that the result of these negotiations has been improved U.S. protectionism against Canada? Under those circumstances let us have an election and let the people decide who is right or wrong.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the position is that the hon. gentleman's Leader has now shown that it does not matter whom the people of Canada elect to form a Government. It is an unelected Senate, which will have a majority of Liberal Senators until the year 2008 if they all live to be 75, which is going to be making the important decisions for Canada.

For the first time since 1913 a Member of the House of Commons has called on the unelected Senate, the 50 appointees of former Liberal Prime Minister Trudeau, to stop the House of Commons, the elected body, in its tracks.

Where were they when Prime Minister Trudeau got elected opposing wage and price controls and then came into office and put wage and price controls into effect? Where was the Senate then? Where was the Senate when the Auto Pact was introduced in the House? Where was the Senate when GATT was introduced in the House? The Senate is the unelected Government of Canada and the people of Canada are going to have to decide that issue in the next election.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, before the Hon. Minister bursts from an excess of gas, why does he not simply call the election and be relieved of his discomfort and pain? That is the best way of dealing with it.

Mr. Speaker: That, of course, was a question but I would ask the Hon. Member to put his question directly to the Minister.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I suppose you know we will probably never get a straight answer from that Minister.

The U.S. Congress now has a Bill in front of it which it can amend and which includes additional powers to monitor Canadian imports to determine if they have subsidies, and the right to take retaliatory action. It is a Bill that gives United States Congress legislation full superiority over the trade agreement, compared to the fact that our trade Bill puts all our legislation subservient to it. All those measures create major discrimination, discrepancy and disadvantage for Canadians. Under those circumstances, is it not only proper, right and responsible for this Government to call an election and let the Canadian people decide? That is the real democratic choice.

• (1425)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, what feeble logic. Why does the hon. gentleman

not call on President Reagan to call an election? Why did he not call on President Reagan to resign his seat and run again, using the same demented logic that he is using today?

The hon. gentleman has nothing to depend upon but the senatorial lemmings in the Senate. The Leader of the Opposition is now leader of the senatorial lemmings, and he is going to have an election. When the election comes, it will be decided by the Prime Minister in accordance with the Constitution, not by the hidden Government, not by Senators crawling out of their crevices in the Senate and then trying to force elections. The Constitution provides for a democracy here in Canada and that is what we are going to have.

* * *

[Translation]

DAY CARE CENTRES

DAY CARE SERVICES—ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL CHILDREN—
MINISTER'S POSITION

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Yesterday the Government tabled its Bill on child care. We looked at the Bill and found that our forebodings about this Bill were correct, namely that access to daycare for all children in Canada is not guaranteed and will depend on the choice the provinces will make. The provinces have a choice between two programs: the CAP which prioritizes lower and middle-income families, and the new legislation tabled yesterday which makes no specific mention of these families. Why didn't the Minister specify these groups in his legislation so that all children in this country would have access to day care?

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I remind the Hon. Member that in all areas of social policy which fall within provincial jurisdiction, former Liberal Governments when they received agreements, whether on health care, on medical care or on the Canada Pension Plan, just to name three, and as recently as the Canada Health Act, attempts were made by the former Minister, my predecessor, to bring in national standards but the Government did not get national standards because of constitutional requirements.

Therefore, the Hon. Member should not think that, just because provinces have jurisdiction in the area of social policy, there will not be standards that will be acceptable to the public or that the provinces are recalcitrant in establishing standards. When the legislation is passed, we will have federal-provincial agreements with the provinces. In each and every case where there is an agreement, it will reflect not only the Bill but also the agreement between the federal and provincial Governments.