

Oral Questions

product, since it is a health hazard and may be fatal? Will you make a decision to protect the lives of our children?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I believe I said yesterday that the deaths of these teenagers are something we cannot tolerate. However, we must still look at the facts of the matter, even if those facts are not necessarily pleasant. What we have here is improper use of a product that, if it is used for the purpose for which it was intended, does not constitute a hazard for the consumer. However, Mr. Speaker, because we realize this is a dangerous situation, I met officials from the Department of National Health and Welfare, and I was informed that discussions are already taking place with the manufacturers to accelerate the removal of freon from the product in question.

REQUEST THAT PRODUCTS BE PLACED OUT OF REACH OF
CHILDREN

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montréal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. We are trying to get the Minister to be a little more aggressive in his approach to this question. Before we get reports tomorrow or the day after, that more children have made improper use of this product—and we know the problem exists—could the Minister make a formal request so that, in a matter of weeks, these products are shelved in such a way that children cannot get at them? Other hazardous products are strategically placed so that children cannot reach them. Could the Minister take action and immediately ask to have these hazardous products, which are now on the shelves, put away where children cannot get at them?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, as I said before, it is unfortunate that the incident occurred. The fact remains that it happened as a result of improper use of a product by three teenagers. I agree that we cannot tolerate this kind of thing happening, as I said before, and discussions are already under way with the manufacturer to accelerate the removal of freon from the product in question.

* * *

[English]

FILM DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY

EFFECT OF CANADA—UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question, which is directed to the Prime Minister, concerns the fact that not only are the Americans rewriting Canadian film distribution policy but also the fact that there have been sell-outs throughout the trade deal in terms of our cultural sovereignty, namely, Articles 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2012, as well as Articles 401 and 1607.

An Hon. Member: Is this the preamble?

Ms. McDonald: Throughout the free trade negotiations our cultural industries have been on the bargaining table, despite everything that the Prime Minister has said to the contrary. Perhaps the worst of the many features I have in mind in making that assertion is that contained in Article 2005, paragraph 2, which states:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, a Party may take measures of equivalent commercial effect . . .

In other words, retaliation.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the Hon. Member to refrain from quoting extensively, and to put her question.

Ms. McDonald: My question is the following. Does this retaliation feature in Article 2005 not make it possible for the Americans to retaliate against any film distribution policy that is going to establish an independent film industry in Canada, as well as make it possible for retaliation in other cultural industries?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I cannot see the connection between the question the Hon. Member is asking and the situation. There are a number of clauses in the agreement. She quotes Article 2004, Article 2006, and Article 2010, none of which have any relevance to the question she is asking. The free trade agreement has not yet been adopted by either country, with the result that any U.S. interests wishing to secure a change to the agreement, or wishing to block the agreement in its entirety, bring to bear on the U.S. Congress whatever lobbying pressures they can.

That is the way the system works in the U.S. It has been working that way since 1789.

EFFECT OF AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, again my question is directed to the Prime Minister, and it is one that concerns the general position this Government has taken in respect of our cultural industries, that being that they were not on the bargaining table.

My question, which I would ask the Prime Minister to answer, is this. Would he not agree that the articles I have cited show very clearly that all kinds of cultural industries were bargained away; that it was not just film, but included the print media? As well, the tariff elimination in this sector will also affect sound recordings.

Will the Prime Minister not come clean with Canadians and admit that we will suffer a serious loss of our cultural sovereignty through this trade deal?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, these ridiculous fabrications and misconceptions are touted around the country by the Hon. Member and members of her Party, and the labour movement, and repeated