

Oral Questions

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, in the first place the hon. gentleman has made an assumption that is not correct. Naturally we are protesting and we disagree with that language, but perhaps the hon. gentleman will read the clauses of the free trade agreement. I recommend this to the House.

I am initiating a \$10-million campaign shortly so that Canadians will know of every facet of the agreement and how best to take advantage of the agreement. If, rather than opposing and obstructing, the hon. gentleman would look at the provisions of the agreement, he would see a clause in the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement in which the Americans agree to the grandfathering of certain provisions with reference to the East Coast of Canada but reserve their rights to proceed under the GATT if they so wish in the future. That is a right that the Americans have that we cannot take from them, although we will strongly oppose any such action if they do commence any such action.

PROMOTION CAMPAIGN—CONTRACT WITH JOHN LASCHINGER

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade and it concerns the juicy contract that the Minister for International Trade gave to his former leadership campaign manager, John Laschinger. The cost of running the trade office is somewhere in the area of \$30 million. The previous ad campaign cost no less than \$12.7 million. Now this new campaign with Mr. Laschinger will cost \$10 million, for a grand total of \$52,700,000.

How much of this latest \$10-million goody contract will be going to the Minister's friend, Mr. Laschinger? Isn't that relationship just a bit too incestuous?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, one has come to expect this kind of low-life behaviour from the Hon. Member. It was Thomas Carlyle who once said about Algernon Swinburne, after someone said he would like to introduce him to Swinburne, that he did not want to meet someone who was sitting in a sewer and adding to it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: The hon. gentleman is in the Swinburne category.

With respect to the question, we are planning a \$10-million campaign so that Canadians will be better able to take advantage of the free trade agreement when it goes into effect. It will involve a series of seminars and conferences across the country. It will involve a series of studies of various industries to show them where opportunities lie for them in the United States market as the tariffs start to come off.

With respect to Mr. Laschinger's part in all of this, Mr. Laschinger is acting as a consultant. It is not a full-time job.

Mr. Boudria: Good justification there.

Ms. Copps: It's a part-time, \$10-million job?

Mr. Crosbie: Mr. Speaker, if I might complete my answer, it is not like the contracts that used to be handed out by the former administration.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I think perhaps we should move to the next question and the Minister may be able to respond.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, am I ever glad that this is not a full-time job, otherwise it would cost a lot of money.

[Translation]

REQUEST THAT CONTRACT BE TABLED

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): I would like to ask the Minister for International Trade whether he is prepared to table the contract in the House today, so that Canadians will know how much it costs to have Mr. Laschinger as the Minister's campaign organizer.

[English]

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, Mr. Laschinger's contract will likely be for a period of three months. It could be extended and it might very well be extended. He is one of the ablest people in this business that one could find.

The contract is for an amount of \$25,000 including expenses, not \$5 million as was suggested by the Member from Winnipeg yesterday nor any of the other fantastic figures that were suggested. His qualifications include a Master's in Business Administration and four years as a senior official in the Government of Ontario where he was Director of Small Business Development and Director of International Trade Development, apart altogether from all his other skills, skills he has used to tackle the impossible. He assisted me in my campaign for the Party leadership.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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CHILD CARE

NATIONAL CHILD CARE STRATEGY—COST-SHARED FUNDING

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. According to media reports, the Government's child care strategy is delayed by funding problems. Would the Minister now recognize the real need for child care which he himself now admits will cost an extra \$1.5 billion, money that he preferred before to put into tax measures? Will he reconsider his method of funding child care? Will he remove the cap from cost-shared funding so that the real cost of child care is shared more fairly with the provinces?