

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the Right Hon. Minister could conclude the answer to the question.

Mr. Broadbent: Go ahead, Joe, have another go at it.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is the answer I gave to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry.

Mr. Gauthier: Which was no answer.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Stonewalling.

Mr. Broadbent: I might be tempted to refer to the breach between the Minister's ears, but I won't.

Mr. Nystrom: Irreparable.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): The Minister, both in his earlier answers and now, is trying to avoid answering by hurling abuse at the Opposition. That game won't count with the people of Canada, I want to tell the Minister right now.

Mr. Nystrom: That's why you are in third place.

Mr. Broadbent: That is exactly why you have dropped down to third place, this kind of snickering, snide evasiveness, that's it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I am sure that all Hon. Members would want the Hon. Member for Oshawa to put his question succinctly and clearly and I am sure other Hon. Members would want to hear the Minister respond in exactly the same way.

Mr. Broadbent: If the Minister would control his miasma and answer a straight question, I will give him a straight question.

Does the Minister agree with Mr. Reisman that the Americans have now requested to talk about investment that is not related to trade matters and that he has conveyed that to the Cabinet? Or does the Minister agree with the Prime Minister who said that all the Cabinet is aware of is discussions about trade related investment? On what side of the interesting approach to the truth is the Minister?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am not hurling abuse, I am simply drawing the attention of Canadians to a political Party which says one thing on the Meech Lake Agreement in the House of Commons and has its Quebec Party say the exact opposite. That is what I am doing.

Mr. Broadbent: There's a guy who really believes in federalism. I can't believe it.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Yes, I believe in federalism, and I believe federalism requires a national Party—

An Hon. Member: Answer the question.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): —to say the same thing in both languages in all parts of the country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): If I may repeat what I said to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry—

Mr. McDermid: Do it slowly.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): And I will do it very slowly so that the New Democratic Party Leader can understand and can take notes so he can telephone his Members about it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): What has happened is that there have been proposals—there have been suggestions made by the President of the United States, and by others, indicating their general interest in having investment discussed. We have indicated to them that if they have proposals to make, we look forward to receiving them and we will then judge them once we have received them.

At the last meeting of the negotiators there was an oral indication—not a written indication, an oral indication—by the United States negotiator as to some of the details of what they are interested in, none of which goes so far, anywhere near so far as the false impressions left in the House of Commons by the two opposition Parties.

The process now, as the Leader of the NDP might know, would be that the chief negotiator will make a formal recommendation to the cabinet committee. The cabinet committee will consider whether we want to give to the negotiator the mandate to deal with those issues. We will make that judgment on the basis of Canada's best interest. That, of course, will not conclude the matter. The Cabinet of Canada would retain the right to approve or to reject and, indeed, to oversee and to approve or reject throughout the process anything which might be discussed by the negotiator at the table.

Mr. Broadbent: It has only taken a half hour to get that one fact out of the Minister.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I gave it to Lloyd.

INQUIRY CONCERNING AMERICAN INTEREST

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): We now know that the Government is in fact considering broadening the range of discussion about investment. Once again he has yielded to what the Americans wanted. Will the Minister at least share with the House of Commons the areas requested by the Americans that they want to be put on the table for discussion? Will he at least tell the people of Canada that?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): From the beginning of this debate when it became clear that the socialist Party had taken an ideological position