

operation of all levels of government in order to eradicate elder abuse in Canada.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—U.S. DRAFT LEGISLATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade. Yesterday the two Houses of the U.S. Congress endorsed their version of the legislation implementing the Canada-U.S. trade deal. In that legislation is a brand new power for the U.S. administration to harass Canadian exports and so-called Canadian subsidies.

After two years of negotiation, after all the promises raised by the Government, the end result is that Canada is being singled out as being uniquely subject to a brand new trade remedy law, a brand new power to harass and to penalize Canadian exports. That is the result of two years of negotiation.

Considering that the Derek Burney mission is a total failure, that Canada is now subject to a brand new trade power to harass our exports, what will the Government do? Does the Minister have some way to respond to this serious new invasion of Canada's trade rights by the United States?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): The hon. gentleman can splutter all he likes. It does not change the facts. There is no new trade remedy given or sought by the version of the U.S. legislation approved yesterday by the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. All Members of the House should be pleased that both these committees have acted. The Chairmen of both those committees have assured the public at large that they believe it will pass in splendid style in the United States. I would have thought the hon. gentleman would have been pleased with that.

The so-called Baucus-Danforth amendment does not give any new trade remedy to the United States. It does not change the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement that we have entered into. As a result of our representations many changes in language have been made with respect to that amendment. While we still do not like it, and do not think it should be in the Bill or is necessary to be in the Bill, it only gives the Americans the same kind of powers to investigate alleged subsidies and the like as we have in our legislation. I can tell the hon. gentleman that he does not need to be upset, and his theatrical performance can be toned down somewhat because it is not the crisis he is pretending it is.

Oral Questions

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, he is the one talking about theatrical performances? You have to be kidding!

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT OF CANADIAN LEGISLATION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, it simply proves once again that the Minister has not read the proper documents. Again, his illiteracy is proving to be a disadvantage for Canadians.

Section 31 of the legislation endorsed yesterday by the United States gives the U.S. Administration new powers not only to monitor Canadian exports and determine subsidies, but to initiate actions unilaterally against those exports. That is a brand new power. It singles out Canada exclusively. It does not apply to other countries. Yet the Minister somehow has his head stuck in the sand or some other place where darkness prevails and does not understand that this is a clear violation of existing trade law. It is a brand new power. It makes Canadian exporters vulnerable to brand new trade actions. I want to know if the Minister is going to amend our Bill to give us the same powers the Americans are abrogating to themselves.

• (1120)

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I repeat again that the amendment known as the Baucus-Danforth amendment, in its final form, does not create any new remedies for American industries or for American interests whatsoever. It provides certain powers for the U.S. trade representative to investigate complaints if an industry believes it is competing against subsidized imports into the United States, it gives certain powers to investigate to try to establish what the facts are. It establishes no new remedies. It is not in conflict with the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. We don't think it is necessary. We don't think this is the proper place to have such a provision inserted.

It has been universalized in its application so it does not apply just to Canada. It will apply to any country that enters into a free trade agreement—

Mr. Axworthy: There's only one, then.

Mr. Crosbie: —with the United States. There may well be others, including Japan, where the Senate Finance Committee is now investigating and doing a study to see if there might be room for a trade agreement between Japan and the United States. So I can tell the hon. gentleman—

Mr. Foster: That we struck out.

Mr. Crosbie: —there is no new remedy being provided for American interests under this amendment.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, when the Minister says that Canada has not been singled out, there is only one nation that is proposing to sign a