

Oral Questions

Mr. Crosbie: It is a rule of legislative draftsmanship. Any provisions of Canadian federal law inconsistent with the free trade agreement are amended by the agreement. That is all it says. There is no takeover of provincial powers. There is a most careful attempt to fail to intrude upon provincial powers except in one area with reference to wine and spirits. The Government takes to itself the authority to ensure that the FTA is observed and that provisions which discriminate against American wine and liquor sales in Canada cannot be put in place by the Government of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Time!

Mr. Crosbie: It is not time. I am asked a question and I have to be allowed the time to answer it.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, it is extraordinarily disappointing that a Minister of the Crown would treat in such a trifling manner the usurpation of the powers of this Parliament by the Act he tabled.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT ELECTION BE HELD

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the Bill the Minister has tabled undermines provincial jurisdiction and the sovereignty of this Parliament. In fact, it undermines the sovereignty of this country. Therefore, will he take the offer he made this morning to call an election by the end of the summer and advance it by two or three months? Considering the enormous and dramatic impact this Bill will have on the very structure of Canadian society, why not call the election now and let the Canadian people decide what should be done?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, an election will be called sometime between now and the end of 1989 when the Prime Minister decides to recommend to the Governor General that Parliament be dissolved. The free trade agreement will be a central part of that election, whether it has been implemented before or after the election call.

The hon. gentlemen opposite, if they continue with their pledge to oppose the free trade agreement, do not have to waste their energy trying to rip the agreement in half. If they are elected in our stead all they have to do is give six months' notice under the agreement and they can terminate it, if they dare. But they will never dare do that, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Axworthy: Watch us.

[*Translation*]

PROVINCES' RIGHTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade. I would like to point out to him that Clauses 6 and 9 of Bill C-130 on the trade agreement are the most blatant intrusion of

the federal Government in fields of provincial jurisdiction in human memory. In electricity, gas, petroleum, wine, liquor, professional codes, wood-cutting fees, construction worker mobility, the federal Government is taking upon itself the power to intervene and go over the heads of the provinces to amend unilaterally laws that the federal Government or the government in Washington want changed.

Mr. Speaker, why has the federal Government decided to violate provincial rights to implement a trade agreement for which it has received no mandate from the Canadian people?

[*English*]

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman talks about mandates. It was his Party that was elected on a platform that they were totally against wage and price controls, got elected, and implemented them immediately thereafter. What a gigantic example of hypocrisy; the hon. gentleman promised one thing and delivered exactly the opposite.

● (1425)

Anyone who cares to examine our legislation will see that we only exercise our jurisdiction in areas given to the Government of Canada under the BNA Act, and which have been given to the Government of Canada since 1867. These are areas, of course, that predecessors of the hon. gentleman opposite observed in every particular.

By golly, what can Mr. Trudeau be thinking when he looks at this pusillanimous display opposite today?

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, I regret that the Minister for International Trade takes such a tone to answer extremely serious questions. Tomorrow, we can begin a debate on . . .

[*English*]

I will return to my question. I do not want to engage in that type of thing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, not only Ontario objects to the federal Government's intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. The Government of Quebec, through its Minister for International Trade, said yesterday that it was unacceptable for the federal Government to proceed in this way.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister said that. It is in this morning's newspapers, he mentioned it on television yesterday when I was debating this question with him.

Is the Minister aware that if the provinces refuse, Clause 6 could give the federal Government the power to change the pricing policies of Crown corporations like Hydro-Quebec and if these policies are displeasing to the federal Government or the United States, the federal Government can act to change