

Judges Act

companies coming to testify is not accurate. Margaret Atwood appeared before the committee the other night. She is a very fine Canadian and she was there the other night as a witness. There have been small and large business groups, Chambers of Commerce, and a very broad cross-section of the Canadian economy. This afternoon the National Farmer's Union was there. The committee is hearing many groups, and they will do this across Canada.

● (1650)

The other allegations that have been made by some of the speakers this afternoon points up the type of opposition that we are receiving to this agreement. The rhetoric is very high. Yet the facts that are being delivered are not substantiated. That is what we want to do with this committee. We want those facts substantiated across the country from coast to coast.

As the Hon. Member knows, the standing committee is the master of its own House. It made this decision, and the Hon. Member knows that. It was not a government decision. It was a decision by the standing committee, voted freely, and the fears and the concerns being expressed are completely unfounded.

I wish to remind the House of a couple of things. A trade agreement called the Auto Pact was signed 22 years ago. It was done in secrecy. There were no public hearings. It never came to the House of Commons. The then Prime Minister of Canada flew to a ranch in Texas to sign the agreement. The public had no opportunity for input whatsoever. As a matter of fact, at the time the Canadian public felt they had been had.

The Liberals are up today and the New Democratic Party, but more to the Liberals, talking about those hearings and how they will have to go into every town and nook and cranny in this country. They know that that is a phoney issue. A more recent policy that was brought in, the National Energy Program, let us talk about the hearings on that. Let us hear about the intervention in that type of thing. Did they have a referendum on that? No. Did they have a referendum on the Auto Pact? No.

What I am saying is this Government is going that extra mile to provide Canadians with input to an important trade agreement, one which will benefit Canada for years to come, in the same manner as the Auto Pact has benefited Canada and will continue to do so.

Therefore, we support this travel by the committee, because we think it is important that it gets out across this country. It will hold hearings morning, afternoon, and evening to ensure that Canadians are heard on this important issue. That committee is not going with blinkers on. It is going to hear evidence, unlike the Ontario committee which starts off every hearing by stating, "We are against it. It doesn't matter whether you agree or disagree, we are against it". Those are not the type of hearings that we are conducting. We are conducting fair, open hearings across the country. The Government is supporting that.

We hope that this afternoon a decision of this Parliament will permit it to travel in order that Canadians can express their opinion on one of the finest agreements that has ever been reached in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

[*English*]

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Before we were so rudely interrupted on this matter, we were dealing with Bill C-88. I think there was a disposition to have the matter dealt with on second reading. I am wondering if there will be a disposition of the House to allow the question to be put before the recorded vote takes place on this particular issue, if that meets with the approval of all Parties?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

JUDGES ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Hnatyshyn that Bill C-88, an Act to amend the Judges Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

An Hon. Member: On division.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.