

He said: Honourable senators, it is not vital that I make these comments today, except that it appears today will be the last day that we will be here before the summer recess. Therefore, I should like to make a few comments on the inter-parliamentary group under your sponsorship and chairmanship, Your Honour, when we visited Brazil a few weeks ago.

I wish particularly to draw the attention of honourable senators to the very comprehensive report that has been filed in the Senate with respect to the trip we made to Brazil in response to an invitation extended by that country to the Senate and, more specifically, to His Honour. I will be brief about this matter, because that comprehensive report is available to honourable senators.

The interesting thing about this trip was that we were invited to Brazil to meet with a number of the parliamentarians and others involved in economic and political activity in Brazil, after they had been under a military dictatorship for four decades. In other words, for approximately 40 years they had not exercised those functions that take place in a democracy in terms of political structure or economic structure in that country.

My impression is that, for the short time that their government has been involved in trying to set up a democratic process, such as that enjoyed by some of the other countries in the world — and they mentioned Canada in particular, which was probably why we were invited — Brazil is doing very well. Their system is not perfect; no one ever gets that close to perfection, but they have been perfecting their system for slightly less than two years, and they are doing well. As Canadians, we should be prepared to help them, not only for their benefit but also for ours.

Prior to the country turning into a democracy — that is, when it was a military dictatorship — they did not buy anything. I cannot say that categorically, however, because they did not buy on the international market or trade with countries any more than they absolutely had to buy. For our benefit, I wish to tell you that, in the last year, we sold them \$250-million worth of wheat and grain. That is especially important in the present international market. That is to our benefit, and certainly to theirs.

I want to close my comments by saying that we were taken on some extremely interesting trips into the centre of the Amazon jungle and into the rain forest. I was amazed at what we found there. For example, we were taken to a city of 1.5 million people in the rain forest. I had never realized that such a city existed in the middle of the Amazonian rain forest.

You will remember, Your Honour, that we were also taken to the opera house, which has existed longer than Canada has been a country. That building dates back to the last century. The Brazilians are very proud of it, and so they should be.

This was a particularly enlightening trip for me. There were many exciting and enjoyable things associated with the trip, however, it was extremely useful in cold-blooded economic terms as well. I am sure that our hosts were grateful that we made

the trip there. They will be looking to Canada for help in becoming a member of some form of better trade arrangement, whether it is a free trade arrangement or just some better trading arrangement than they now enjoy.

• (1150)

Our Speaker can take a great deal of credit for leading several discussions with their politicians, their chambers of commerce and other economic bodies as they attempt to move from the form of government of the past 40 years to a new and successful process.

Your Honour, I wish to express my appreciation to you and to everyone else who was a part of that extremely successful trip.

On motion of Senator Berntson, for Senator MacDonald, debate adjourned.

CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN
HUNTSVILLE, ONTARIO—INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. H.A. Olson rose pursuant to notice of June 20, 1995:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group, held in Huntsville, Ontario, from May 18 to 22, 1995.

He said: Honourable senators, this year's meeting of the Canada-U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Group, which met in Huntsville, Ontario, in May, was attended by an almost-brand-new group of members because of the Republicans' win in the American election. The Democrats were thrown out.

In the U.S. government, whenever one party gains control of either the Senate or of the House of Representatives, that party elects all the committee chairmen. It was extremely important that our group made the acquaintance of the Republicans who have taken on these tasks. No matter how long they hold those positions, we as parliamentarians in this inter-parliamentary group must get acquainted with them in order to help resolve problems such as trading disputes. This issue extends to other countries as well.

A comprehensive report has been filed with the Senate. I invite honourable senators to read it. The meeting worked out well. We actually completed the work of the committee on economic matters before the time set aside had expired. I cannot remember that happening at any other occasion. We have always run out of time before completing discussions on the economic irritants between Canada and the United States.