

*Oral Questions*

this despite fierce opposition from the hon. member's party.

• (1420)

Every time we introduced a bill in the House to create jobs for young people or increase amounts allocated to the retraining program the hon. member for Hamilton East voted against it.

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I voted against his unemployment insurance bill and I am proud of that.

[*English*]

In the last four years of Prime Minister Mulroney's mandate 325,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost. Anyone who represents an industrial riding will see the devastation day by day, week by week that is causing.

I want to ask the Prime Minister this. In the dying days of his government, will he make good on his personal promise to have specific retraining programs for those workers who lost their jobs as a result of his free trade agreement?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, with regard specifically to the free trade agreement, perhaps my hon. friend would like eventually to discuss some facts. On an annual basis Canada exported \$19.6 billion more to the United States in 1992 than in 1988. In January 1993 our exports to the United States were 23 per cent ahead of the level in January 1992.

My hon. friend refers to the Mulroney accomplishments. My hon. friend refers to the Mulroney record. I am thereby forced, despite my modesty, to mention some facts to my hon. friend. As of the end of December 1992 employment in Canada was up by 1.3 million jobs from the September 1984 level; from 1984 to 1991 employment grew at an average annual rate of 1.7 per cent, the fastest of G-7 countries; inflation was at its lowest level in 30 years; and interest rates were at their lowest level in 21 years.

This compares with a record by the Liberals of unemployment of 11.8 per cent, interest rates at 22.75 per cent and inflation at 12.9 per cent, the worst record since statistics were compiled in the history of Canada. That

was the Liberal record and this is the Mulroney record and we are proud of it.

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**NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister for International Trade.

Speaking Friday at McGill, Bob Dunn, an economist at George Washington University, said that the Governments of Canada and the United States are using misleading data on the job losses that will result from the NAFTA deal. Professor Dunn said that both the Canadian and American governments are choosing not to speak about the true jobless figures from NAFTA.

I ask the minister: Why is he hiding the true job loss figures? When will he let Canadians know the whole story on NAFTA job losses?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend wrote that question before he heard the answer from the Prime Minister two questions ago.

I will give the answer again. Thank you very much for the subsequent question. The answer is that in the month of January we had a remarkable increase in exports and that follows on a period in 1992 where exports from Canada to the United States under the free trade agreement were up by 16 per cent. This is a huge increase which demonstrates that Canadian companies are finding business opportunities in the United States and turning those opportunities into jobs back here in Canada.

It is a curious thing. That article that my friend is reading was from the same day that these statistics came out, but there was not one mention of those statistics in that article. It is a curious thing that the media would not bring the two into the same article to get some balance in the reporting.

• (1425)

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the minister who neglects to say that 80 per cent of our exports to the United States were duty free before the trade deal. He does not seem to make a connection with the ongoing nature of those