

*Government Orders**[English]*

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***FREE TRADE AGREEMENT****SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES**

Mr. Pierre H. Vincent (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleagues in both parties.

I would like to table two copies of a document, in both official languages, pursuant to subsection 59(3) of the customs tariff, respecting the suspension of privileges granted under the free trade agreement.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[English]***CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN****MEASURE TO AMEND**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-32, an act to amend the Canada Assistance Plan, as reported (without amendments) from the Standing Committee on Finance; and the motion of Mr. Langdon (p. 5964).

Mr. Jerry Pickard (Essex—Kent): Mr. Speaker, the debate on CAP has been going on for a fairly long time now. Many people have used their time discussing the issue and how it would affect Canadians in general, how it would affect children and how it would affect the poor across this country.

My concern comes back to two or three issues that have to do with the CAP. First of all I think a program put in place that will cause very great hardship to many people in my area is an unfair program. In this case I look at what is happening with employment rolls and the difficulties in southwestern Ontario, not only the farm community problems but also difficulties with dismantling of manufacturing throughout Ontario. I quickly realize our welfare rolls have swelled and who has to pay the bill. Very clearly there are policies in place and bills have to be paid.

It seems very unfair that this government through a quick act, through a stroke of the pen, would say it is no longer responsible for the policies that have occurred in the past short time. What I am referring to is the fact that many of the policies carried out in the name of management by this government have created very difficult times in southwestern Ontario.

When we look at the free trade agreement, at the great promises that were made in it and at the results of that free trade agreement, we see that there were thousands of jobs lost, thousands of people out of work. We see children having a very difficult time of it. I see that for people in every walk of life. Whether it is small business, the farm community, the factory worker or big business in my area, the dollars are not there to support the economy as there were in the past.

The wardens of both Kent and Essex counties tell me that their welfare rolls have doubled, tripled and greater than that in some cases. In speaking about the numbers of dollars they require for social agencies to operate, their budgets have just skyrocketed far beyond their ability to pay.

In my community in Blenheim we have had a tax revolt which is the voice of the people saying that the taxes being imposed on them are far too strenuous in these times.

At the same time the federal government has created many of the problems with the policies it brought forward and is now saying that it is opting out of the bottom end of this whole thing by taking away support moneys to the programs put in place to help those in dire need.

I feel that the government really has put itself in a corner. As I stop and think about that I really wonder what type of managers the Tories are. I have to say they are poor managers.

When I was speaking a little earlier I heard three members across the benches suggest that the national debt when they took over was far higher than I recall the statements being. One member from Calgary suggested the national debt was as high as \$206 million. Another suggested \$220 million.

I have an inquiry that was sent to the then Minister of Finance, the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre. The question directly asked him what the national debt was in 1984. The answer he sent back was that the national debt