

Free Trade

Speakers Lamoureux and Michener. The condition of requiring the national interest to be determined by means of a general election is a new proposition which would have to be put forward as an independent motion on notice.

[*Translation*]

Therefore, under the circumstances, and with regret, I have no alternative but to declare that the amendment cannot be proposed to the House.

[*English*]

In closing I also want to say that, because of the very great importance of the motion itself and the issue, I wanted to hear very carefully from all Hon. Members in the Chamber. Hon. Members will remember that on Wednesday with their assistance we spent nearly an hour discussing the procedural aspects of the motion.

As I say, I regret very much that I cannot be more generous as I was urged to be, but I am bound by the procedural rules and the precedents. I hope Hon. Members, who I know feel very strongly about this matter, will accept the ruling in that spirit.

Continuing debate with the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, perhaps there has been a longer pause than usual between the last comments I made to the House and the comments with which I should like to begin this morning.

I remind Hon. Members of the House that within the speech I am giving as trade spokesman for my Party the emphasis has been very much on the necessity of having a correct, sort of modern framework which recognizes the importance of international firms and their key role in the trade of the country in order for us to assess what we have in front of us as a trade agreement.

● (1130)

From that perspective it becomes possible to ask some questions; first, about whether the objectives were achieved by this Government in the trade agreement. I think I demonstrated as clearly as one possibly could that the objectives not only were not achieved, but we have left ourselves in an extremely vulnerable position *vis-a-vis* the United States concerning future legislation on countervail and anti-dumping.

There are also a set of crucial concessions that we have given up which, as an independent country with a sense of self-direction for the future, we should not have been prepared to give up. These are concessions in the area of investment, in the area of energy, in the area of job losses, and concern areas such as economic development and our capacity to act freely in economic development in the future.

These concessions, combined with the absence of success in obtaining the basic goals which the Government set out to achieve, leave one with no other choice but to conclude that

this agreement itself is bad news for Canadians. It is an unfair deal for average Canadians. It is an unacceptable deal for the country, as I am sure an election would prove. It is, therefore, something which we as a Party completely and flatly reject.

What was perhaps most unfortunate about the approach the Government had taken was that there were and there are alternatives which could have been selected. In my view, and that of my Party, they would have been much more effective and would have met the interests of the average people of Canada much more effectively and with much more concern for their interests than is true of this deal.

In the closing period of my speech on Tuesday I dealt with four areas which we felt were crucial in an alternative approach. I dealt with approaches to deal with U.S. protectionism itself directly, through item by item negotiations, through sectoral moves and through the establishment of a trade dispute agency. I had also suggested that agreed subsidies would give this country and its business people some sense of security and some sense of a guaranteed access. The Government keeps saying that the best method for proceeding is through the GATT. Though faced with an inequitable negotiation process, we have people supporting our view and we are able to put that view forward with much greater force and with much greater possibility of winning support from the United States for that view, a view which would restrict, control and dampen the use by the United States of subsidies which have been so damaging to parts of our economy.

It is crucial for us to start to move toward the establishment of various areas of technological expertise, areas of advantage within our economy in both the industrial and the service sectors. We cannot do this with a hope and a prayer. We have to do it with government leadership and with government playing an active role.

We have before us a variety of methods which can be used to help achieve that set of goals. We can put much more emphasis on training, on science and technology. But we could also use methods such as state purchasing policy, planning agreements with the corporate sector, Canadian content rules, tariffs themselves and public ownership. There are a variety of different methods which in a pragmatic way can be applied to establish for ourselves areas of advantage from which we can serve our home market, and which, for the future, enable us to expand our exports, not just to the United States but to the rest of the world.

I had just finished on Tuesday talking about the importance of recognizing the key role of multinational corporations in the trade area and, therefore, the necessity of seeing that there is some direct effort to regulate and review what those multinational firms do with respect to our country. For instance, I suggested it was crucial that we had legislation to make it possible for communities and for workers to review decisions taken by multinational companies to shut down their plants within Canada. They should not simply have the right, as has been the case throughout this country far too long, to shut