

goes through. We disagree with this trade deal. Nevertheless, this is a constructive amendment meant to improve our position as a country, if we face serious pressures in agriculture or serious adjustment pressures which are damaging to our communities and our workers, and if we face competitive disadvantages for our industries which the Canadian Manufacturers Association itself says could very well be there if the value of the Canadian dollar continues to rise. Therefore, I ask the Conservatives to tell the truth in this case and recognize that these problems exist, to accept this amendment and in that way improve the legislation which is in front of the House at this particular time.

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Selkirk—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour at this time to enter into the debate on the amendments put forward by the Liberal Party. I note with interest that the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) had some quite unique things to say with respect to the legislation and what may affect it either positively or negatively. I found very interesting his comments about the possible potential problem. That is pretty vague. There is always a possibility of problems with Canada's trade throughout the world, but he warns us of a possible potential problem. What is new? Even if we did not have a free trade agreement, problems would arise from time to time. He should certainly know that. That is what our trade negotiators have to be concerned with. That is natural.

I found his idea of economics interesting. He mentioned the change in our exchange rate with the United States. Before we had a trade agreement with the United States I recall at one time that we had a higher rate. The Canadian dollar was worth more than the American dollar, and no one jumped in to lower it so that we could have some kind of advantage. I believe the New Democratic Party at one time advocated dropping the dollar to a lower level to give us an advantage in our trade. That kind of economics never works. That would mean that the people of Mexico should be flourishing in business activity today because there are over 300 pesos to the dollar. What kind of nonsense economics is that?

What else can one expect but that type of expertise from a person who stands here and advocates that kind of concern? Our dollar relationship with the United States has always had some bearing on our trade, but I might add that as our dollar has been strengthening against the U.S., our trade has been strengthening. As a matter of fact, we had the highest trade surplus in the last month that has been recorded for many, many years. I ask Hon. Members to think about what they are saying and not to make statements that have no bearing at all.

● (1250)

I would return to some quotations with respect to the Hon. Member from Fort Garry who said that Clause 7 should be deleted. A great many of his colleagues and supporters from across Canada say exactly the opposite. I would like to point those out.

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

The Premier of Quebec made the following statement, as reported in *The Toronto Star* on January 28, 1987:

Bourassa took the unusual step of switching to English to hit out at Broadbent for claiming that 'Canada is for sale' under the terms of the proposed free trade deal.

"Mr. Broadbent should know that we are not talking about the sovereignty of Canada," he said.

"We are not even talking about a custom's union. We are not talking about a monetary union. We are not talking about a common market. We are talking about enlarging trade between Canada and the U.S.

"How could you seriously say that Canadian sovereignty is at stake when we want to protect Canadian markets in the U.S.?"

That is the Premier of Quebec lecturing in a very wise way the Leader of the New Democratic Party who needs some lecturing from time to time. As reported in *The Toronto Star* on November 27, 1987, the Premier of Quebec had this to say:

What's at stake are dozens and dozens of billions of dollars of potential growth for Canada's resource-based economy. Canada is the only one of 24 developed countries which is not part of some sort of free trade area. Why this isolation?

The New Democratic Party would advocate isolation. The Premier made the following statement in the *Assemblée Nationale* on March 8, 1988:

Quebec is supporting this free trade agreement because it wants to make its economy more modern, more efficient and more productive.

What is wrong with the premier of a province wanting to do that? He went on to state:

This agreement will enable Quebec to be more confident about its economic future.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the free trade agreement will be good for Quebec's energy sector.

Why would anyone in this House, especially members of the two opposition Parties, want to hinder Quebec from reaching its potential and enhancing its economic growth? Therefore the Liberal Leader of this House is in complete disagreement with the Leader of the Liberal Party in the Province of Quebec. In *Le Devoir*, as reported on August 17, 1987, there appeared this:

The Premier of Quebec reiterated his total support for free trade between Canada and the United States. "If we perpetuate protectionism, we will, in the medium term, be dooming ourselves to an irreversible economic decline," he said.

The Quebec Premier wants a minimal agreement dealing with investment, tariff barriers, transitional measures and the creation of an arbitration panel. Other issues, such as trade in services, could be dealt with later.

The Premier of Quebec had this to say, as reported in *La Presse* on December 15, 1987:

Finally, Quebec is satisfied with a supplementary appeal procedure to the bi-national panel that will rule on trade disputes.

Mr. Langdon: Are you switching to a Quebec riding?

Mr. Holtmann: Do you have something against Quebec? Stand up in the House and say it.

Let us go to other parts of this country—let us take all of Canada. Let us consider a fellow by the name of John Ciaccia,