

Adjournment Debate

In the first round, hundreds of farmers have lost their jobs.

In my own riding of Haldimand—Norfolk, the local economies are really starting to feel the pinch. Tomato farmers in my riding were told in December that after 25 years of having contracts with the Campbell Soup Company, they no longer need their tomatoes. Why? They do not need them because they can go to the United States and, because of the free trade deal, get paste from the United States instead of buying local tomatoes grown in my area.

There are stories like this all across our country. Company after company is closing down and returning to the United States. U.S. parent companies are closing up Canadian shop, while Canadian companies are bringing financial booms to American cities like Buffalo, where they can find low wage rates, low taxes and much cheaper land than they can in the Niagara Peninsula.

For other companies, the threat of closing shop in Canada is enough. Workers at Borden Company Limited in Montreal have been forced to accept wage cuts and reduced benefits because the U.S. parent company had threatened to close the plant unless workers took concessions to make the plant as efficient as its U.S. plants.

• (1815)

So this is round one. Workers lose their jobs or are forced into wage cuts while their government raises taxes and cuts vital programs and reneges on election promises to bring in the world's best adjustment programs.

We are not seeing these programs. They are nowhere to be seen. Canadians are afraid to imagine what sellouts and devastation round two will bring.

Even before the subsidy negotiations have begun, the government has trimmed, cut and chainsawed its way through Canadian programs. This government is unilaterally disarming itself of programs aimed at protecting and helping Canada's unemployed, workers and farmers. The list goes on.

As I questioned the Minister for International Trade in the House yesterday and today, he gave no assurances to the steelworkers in my riding, and those of Hamilton, Sudbury and Cape Breton—indeed, the steelworkers all across this country—that he would protect their jobs when he meets Carla Hills, his American counterpart tomorrow. He gave no assurances to this House that he

had any programs that could be directed toward helping our Canadian steelworkers.

Let us take a quick look at the list of programs the Canadian government identified as agricultural support programs in Schedule 2, Chapter 7 of the FTA. The list reads like an obituary column: Western Stabilization Act, payments through the Special Canadian Grains Program, expenditures of the Canadian Grain Commission, advance payments and crop insurance.

What programs have the Americans cut? That is right, Madam Speaker, they have cut no programs.

The government sold out this country during the free trade agreement. It said it would give Canada access to the U.S. market and guard Canadians from U.S. protectionism.

Now we have Peter Murphy, a former U.S. negotiator for the FTA, saying that Canadian businesses had better make their presence known in the U.S. because the FTA is no guarantee that we will not be subject to U.S. protectionism.

In closing, in October I asked the government the following question. I asked: "Will the government admit that free trade is not working for Canadians and that the FTA has cost Canadians more than they have gained?". Canadians are still waiting for that answer.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, I will say outright to the hon. member that he should rely more in the capacity of Canadians not to fall behind, since the preliminary report on foreign trade for February 1990 which Statistics Canada released on April 18, indicates that for the first two months in 1990, Canada had a surplus of over \$900 million.

During the first two months of the year, Canada maintained a major trade surplus of \$12.1 million with the United States while in 1989 Canada had a trade surplus with the United States of \$10.4 billion.

Madam Speaker, the Free Trade Accord makes it possible for Canadian corporations to have a secure access to the most important market in the world, and Canadian corporations are responding well. They increased their investments in machinery and equipment. Their capital costs in 1989 increased by 10.7 per cent. Imports are responsible to a great extent for outlays in