

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

well be closed down in that area if the Free Trade Agreement is passed.

The Member also indicated the job creation potential regarding the Free Trade Agreement. Early in the discussions on the agreement the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) stated that free trade would create 350,000 new jobs. He then reduced that to 250,000. I believe it was further reduced.

The Prime Minister did not indicate that more than 800,000 Canadian workers were expected to lose their jobs. He said that approximately 7 per cent of the workforce could be expected to be dislocated. That translates into 800,000 job losses. It is simple arithmetic that when 800,000 is taken away from 350,000, it is not a ringing endorsement of the Free Trade Agreement.

How can the Hon. Member justify the job creation potential of the Free Trade Agreement when, in fact, John Orr of the Council of Canadians used Statistics Canada figures to indicate that the job loss potential of the Free Trade Agreement may amount to approximately 500,000 jobs. In fact, those figures were also suggested when the Minister of Employment stated that there could be a job loss that could exceed half a million jobs.

How can the Hon. Member justify his statements regarding the job creation potential when so many Canadian workers are facing job losses with this Free Trade Agreement?

Mr. Holtmann: I will have to return to an issue that was discussed often in the House. When members of the NDP objected to the Auto Pact and suggested that that was going to cost hundreds of thousands of jobs, exactly the opposite happened. There is a very simple answer to the problem faced by the two opposition Parties. I would love it for them to predict once something that turns out right instead of wrong. It has never come out the way they have predicted in the last four years. With all due respect, through the Speaker I say to the Hon. Member that you are going about the same thing you did when you lost the election. You are trying to scare Canadians. Have a nice evening.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank my constituents of Broadview—Greenwood. This is the second time in 50 years that they have elected a Liberal in Broadview—Greenwood. I would also like to let my friends know at the Pride of Erin, where we are holding our Christmas party tonight, that the reason I am not there is obvious.

My researchers put together a pretty good speech for me about three days ago. In the last few days I have listened to so many speeches that have been repetitive that I have decided to throw most of it out of the window.

I want to talk about my Liberal colleague, the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Ms. Blondin). Two nights ago she made a terrific speech. It was one of the best that we have heard in the House. As reported at page 369 of *Hansard* the Hon. Member stated:

But there are those who wish to work and live out their days as true and proud Canadians, under the protection of a Government in control of their political and economic destinies.

Without being facetious or sarcastic, I say to the Hon. Members on the other side of the House that I hope they are right. Certainly I would not object to being wrong in this instance. I do hope, for the sake of Canada and its people, that they are right.

What was fascinating was that the Minister responsible for housing, for whom I have a lot of respect, was sitting across the hall and he said: "So do we hope we are right".

• (2110)

It was only when I heard that comment that I began to feel there was some real sincerity on the other side of this House in connection with this whole debate.

Like a lot of members on the other side, I am a businessman, and this place, for me, represents the nation's boardroom. And while I realize that Hon. Members opposite have won the election—and I do not want to re-fight it—we on this side are also board members; and even though you on the government side control the board, we have an obligation to state what we have been told by our constituents.

We have heard statistic after statistic about the number of votes received by one Member or another. The combined vote against free trade in my riding was almost 80 per cent. In fact, 10 days before polling day, it stood at 90 per cent, and then Mr. d'Aquino rolled in with his business sponsored ads, and I must tell you that they were very effective. It was a great job of communication.

An Hon. Member: They told the truth.

An Hon. Member: Nonsense.

Mr. Mills: I am not sure that they did tell the truth, and I think the Minister of State for Housing (Mr. McDermid) alluded to that the other evening.