

*Extension of Sittings*

● (0010)

One of the greatest fears that fishermen in Nova Scotia have had for many years is that Americans will get the right to come back and fish on the Canadian side of Georges Bank again. The fact that we have reached this agreement which gives us access to American markets without giving them access back to the Canadian side of Georges Bank is probably the single most important thing we get from this agreement that will benefit the fishery in the South Shore. That is probably the main reason why Senator George Mitchell of Maine so vigorously opposed this agreement at all stages. We do not very often hear about him in Upper Canada.

The reduction of tariffs will mean the creation of jobs for Nova Scotians. We look to the creation of anywhere between 300 and 500 new jobs over the next four or five years. National Sea Products alone estimates that it will mean 200 jobs in its various plants in the South Shore. Clearwater talked about another 100 jobs and, as I mentioned earlier, many other fish plants see possibilities. Because of the growing demand for fish sticks and consumer ready-cooked dinners, this will mean job opportunities and expansion for Nova Scotians.

The dispute settlement mechanism will prevent some of the phoney claims that are presented in courts and will quickly lead to a resolution of others. There was a lot of talk about social programs and a real effort made in Nova Scotia to terrorize fishermen into thinking they would lose their unemployment insurance because of this free trade deal. That is nothing but bafflegab. Thank goodness the people recognized it and elected a Conservative Member to represent them, because it indicated their support of the agreement.

The United States Commerce Department already in 1987, said what the score was with respect to UIC when a countervail was brought against Atlantic ground-fish. The U.S. Department of Commerce threw that claim out and said, of course, Canadian unemployment insurance is not a subsidy because it is universally available.

Much talk was directed to our social programs throughout the campaign. It scared a lot of people in the South Shore. I found it very distressing to go into senior citizens homes to find people who were terrorized into believing that their senior citizens assistance or their pensions and so on would be affected.

Nothing in this agreement whatever imperils social programs that are so much a part of Canadian life and

are so important to Canadians. That matter was never on the table. That would never be put on the table by a Tory Government and no government that I am a part of, and I am proud to be a part of this Government, will ever have any part of impairing in any way things like medicare and unemployment insurance that are so important to Canadians.

The real protection for social programs comes from a strong economy. It comes from having an economy that will grow and generate more revenue for the Government of Canada. That in the long run will give the Government more money to improve the quality of social programs. That is what the people in the South Shore are in favour of. I could go on at some length about the fishery but I am not sure you really want to hear me, Madam Speaker.

I do want to mention two or three other things. Forestry is a major industry in Nova Scotia, particularly in the South Shore. We have one industry, Bowaters, Mersey and Liverpool, that employs close to 1,000 people. Eighty per cent of the product of that plant goes to the United States. It recognizes the value of the free trade agreement.

We have in Nova Scotia a \$50 million Christmas tree industry that employs 3,500 people; 70 per cent of them are in the South Shore. If this agreement did not go through, the U.S. developing Christmas tree industry in New England would be looking to put tariffs up again that would destroy that Christmas tree industry. It is not something we want to see happening. My opponent during the election campaign suggested that we should develop new markets in Asia for our products. I can see selling Christmas trees in Hong Kong, Singapore or Thailand.

We have a Michelin Tire plant that employs 1,500 people. Michelin in Nova Scotia employs 6,000 people, and 95 per cent of its products go to the United States. Michelin is looking at expansion that will create several hundred more jobs because the agreement is going through.

I can talk about ABCO and Lunenburg. I could talk about ABCO plastics in Mahone Bay. I could talk about the beef and pork producers who would be exempted from meat import laws and look forward to new marketing opportunities. I could talk about culture. There is nothing in this agreement that imperils Canadian culture. Canadian culture has never been so strong.