

Government Orders

Mr. Fulton: He wasn't there today. Every week, my foot!

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): I did not realize that the hon. member from the NDP was visiting our national caucus. I regret he is not the one we would welcome most across the floor. We kind of like that cute blond-haired guy that sits in the front row, but if you are keen, I am sure we can work something out.

Given the diversity of regional outlooks in the country and given the extraordinary variety of concerns that preoccupy Canadians—because, notwithstanding that we are a small country of 26 million people, we inhabit the second largest land mass of a country in the world—it is a sign of the extraordinary leadership capability that the Prime Minister has forged a great national governing party that is able to do the work of governing Canada for all Canadians and where all Canadians know their voices are well heard.

The Prime Minister has the loyalty of those who serve him and serve with him. He has the loyalty because he returns that loyalty. One of the aspects of leadership that is very often ignored is one of the things that is most important and that is the ability to create a team. When that is missing, it is very obvious, but it is a strength that often goes unnoticed when it is present because it simply creates the foundation for effective action.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order, please. I would ask all hon. members to be co-operative so that we will be able to hear what the next speaker has to say. I would appreciate the co-operation of both sides of the House.

The Minister of Justice.

[*English*]

Ms. Campbell (Vancouver Centre): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Therefore, out of this extraordinary national organization, a national political force led by an extraordinary national leader, we have an opportunity for the people of my part of the country to have their voices heard as they never have been heard before, or certainly not for much of this century.

The west has in a sense been re-enfranchised, thanks to this Prime Minister. There are 10 western ministers in the Government of Canada. They hold very important

portfolios, portfolios that are important to the people of the west: agriculture, grains and oilseeds, energy, defence, and many other portfolios. That western voice in the Government of Canada has been reflected in the policy of the Government of Canada where western interests have been responded to and the aspirations of western Canadians have finally had an opportunity to be realized.

That is not just because the Prime Minister believes that he is the Prime Minister for all Canadians. In addition to being a leader deeply committed to all the country, he is also a leader with the courage to take the difficult structural decisions that for so long were left untaken by governments in the country which resulted, not just in the economic disadvantage of the country, but in the strains between the regions of the country.

I will give you as a prime example the issue that brought me into federal politics, the free trade agreement. In 1975 the four western premiers met at an economic development conference. They published a manifesto in which they urged the Government of Canada to focus on opening up markets with the United States. For western Canada that was the natural base upon which they could develop their economies, diversify them and get them away from the terrible boom-and-bust dependence on resource economies.

For much of our country's history, it has seemed to those of us in the west that our economy was regarded as a source of raw materials for the industrialization of central Canada and we had a tariff policy that was designed to protect industries in central Canada, whether or not they were efficient.

Those were of great concern to leaders in western Canada. In 1975 the western premiers published a document calling on the Government of Canada to reduce tariffs with the United States and open up opportunities. It is interesting that the document was signed by four western premiers, only one of whom was a Conservative, Peter Lougheed from Alberta. The other three were members of the New Democratic Party—Ed Schreyer, Allan Blakeney, and Dave Barrett from British Columbia.

There is nothing partisan about the concern of western Canadians for the destructive effect of the traditional Canadian tariff policy on our economy.