

*Extension of Sittings*

The South Shore typifies the best of Canada. It is beautiful country. There is no riding in Canada more beautiful. There is no riding that has the beaches, the forests, and the hills that we have. It is a wonderful place to live, and I look forward to returning there very soon.

It is an area that has a wealth of resources, ocean resources, forests, fields and so forth. It is an area that has marvellous people. The 77,000 constituents whom I now represent are a self-reliant people. They are a hospitable people, as the Sikh refugees found out when they landed on the shores of Charlesville which is in the South Shore riding last year. They are a compassionate people as well as an optimistic people. They cherish their values. They are industrious and self-reliant.

We have on the South Shore in Nova Scotia a very proud history. We have a history of European settlement that goes back 350 years, and throughout that period our best times have always been the times when our trading links have been the strongest and the best with the people to the south in the United States. Many Nova Scotians share personal links with the New England area through their friends and relatives. I myself have a grandmother who came from New England of whom I am very proud.

The Free Trade Agreement will be good for Canada but it will be particularly good for Nova Scotia and for the South Shore. I was pleased to hear the previous speaker from this side, the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby), make this point. I perhaps better than anyone in the House know what an outstanding Member and representative he has been here for the last decade, and I compliment him on his remarks.

Debate on this resolution is not waiting to take place. It has been taking place since the negotiations began in June of 1986. I suggest that Canadians want to get on with what they know will be a good deal for Canada.

Why will it be good? It will be good because of the access it will provide us to American markets. It will be good because of the impact and the benefit that will come from the gradual reduction of tariffs. It will be good because of the greater investment that will flow. Such investment has been so valuable to the Province of Nova Scotia as have the jobs it has created, including, for example, the 6,000 jobs that have been created through Michelin Tire plants and through Bowater and the various other industries that we have.

We will benefit from the dispute settlement mechanism that will address the problem that has been created by countervails put up against various products

over the years, and as Canadians we will all benefit from lower consumer prices. In 1986, \$2.1 billion was paid by Canadians in taxes to the United States through tariffs.

I would like to comment briefly on the impact that this legislation, getting on with it through this motion, will have that will benefit the people in the South Shore. By far our biggest industry is the fishery. South Shore is the biggest constituency in Canada in terms of the fishing industry. Approximately 60 per cent of the people of the South Shore are employed directly or indirectly in the fishing industry.

Fishing, of course, is a great industry for Canada, and the fishing industry must be represented as a valuable resource for all Canadians. Sixty per cent of Canadian fish are exported to the United States. Seventy-five per cent of Nova Scotia's fish exports go to the United States. In fact, 62 per cent of all fish caught by Nova Scotians end up going to the United States. That is one of the main reasons why this agreement is so important to us in the South Shore and is so potentially valuable to all Nova Scotians, and indeed to Canada.

All elements of our fishing industry will benefit from this agreement. Fishermen will benefit because there will be guaranteed access for the fish that they catch, and indeed the increased demands for Canadian fish will inevitably lead to better prices down the road. Our processing industry will benefit because of the reduction in tariffs and the jobs that will be created as a result.

I could not help but be amazed, as I went through the various fish plants in my constituency during the campaign, that there are over 200 fish plants in South Shore. In one area alone, Barrington Municipality, there are 110 fish plants. I went into most of them during the election campaign, including Bon Portage Fishery in Shag Harbour, for example, as well as those in Woods Harbour, Doctor's Cove, Bear Point, Clark's Harbour, Centreville, Southdale and Newellton.

Time and again I heard plant operators telling me that the Free Trade Agreement is important to them because it will mean an opportunity for expansion. It will be an opportunity to sell their fish, whether they are selling processed fish or saltfish or more cooked fish. In any case, all of them were looking forward to the opportunities that this agreement presented to them.

I was amazed when I walked into fish plants and heard plant operators saying to me: "I have been a Liberal all my life, but for the first time I am going to vote Conservative because there is no way I can vote against this agreement because it is so good for our industry and so good for our products".