

the past four years have been remarkably excellent in that regard, our political Party was in no way content with the rate of growth that we have or with the level of unemployment. To enhance the economic opportunities for our country, it is clear to all who know the nature of the Canadian economy that our foreign exports have to be secured.

The truth of the matter is that one-third of the individual wealth of Canadians comes from trade. It is also a fact that almost 80 per cent of that which we export is exported to the United States. It is also a fact that our exports to that market were being significantly threatened by the fact that there was a mood of protectionism which was bubbling up into a legislative process which had, in the legislatures of the states and the capital in Washington, nearly 400 bills aimed at protectionism, the impact of which would be, in the largest majority, negative for Canada.

Those who are affiliated with the New Democratic Party, either here in the House of Commons or by their satellite influence such as Bob White, the Vice-President of the New Democratic Party, take the view that this agreement is somehow a threat to our sovereignty, our culture, and our identity. We must bear in mind that Canada became more of a sovereign nation since the war ended in 1945.

● (1120)

Our cultural programs and social programs, particularly pension plans, workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance and medical programs were there at a time when tariffs were coming down. If we consider 1944 as the peak of tariff protection between Canada and the United States, from 1944 to 1988, 75 per cent of tariffs have been reduced. How can the NDP argue that all these programs that we have developed while there has been a 75 per cent reduction in tariffs will disappear when the next 25 per cent are removed? It is simply illogical.

The NDP talk about these threats against our sovereignty. If they believe that some kind of trade relationship with another country will destroy our capacity to market our goods in the world, or preserve our identity as Canadians, then let them find such an example in the 92 other nations that also belong to trade blocs or trade arrangements. If they believe that such a threat exists, I dare members of the NDP to go to New Zealand and tell New Zealanders that they are just like an Aussie, that they behave and think like Australians because they have a trade relationship with them. If there is anything a New Zealander takes pride in, it is the fact that they are not Australian, even though they recognize the mutual advantage of trading with each other without the encumbrance of tariff barriers.

The Liberal Party has stated that it does not want free trade and would tear up the free trade agreement if it ever became the government. My favourite comment is that by Donald Macdonald, a former Liberal Cabinet Minister, who said of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner): "That

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comment that he would tear up the agreement said more about the strength of his wrists than the strength of his judgment".

Canadians should know that Liberals in this country are not opposed to a trade deal with the United States. It is only the Liberals elected in this House, under the leadership of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition and his influence on the Senate, who are opposed. There are many Liberals who are on record as saying that this arrangement is important and good for Canada.

The Premier of Québec, Robert Bourassa, asked:

"How could one seriously say that Canadian sovereignty is at stake when we want to protect Canadian markets in the United States?"

He went on to say:

"What's at stake are dozens and dozens of billions of dollars of potential growth for Canada's resource-based economy. Canada is the only one of 24 developed countries which is not part of some sort of free trade area."

That is the opinion of Robert Bourassa, Premier of Québec. He is a Liberal who is certainly in favour of free trade.

Let me refer to Ray Curran, President of a Liberal constituency association. He said:

"Liberal leader John Turner's position on free trade is totally irresponsible. You can't make agreements between two sovereign governments and then just rip them up."

Those are two Liberals who say this is a good agreement and the proper approach.

Milt Harris, a gentleman whom I know, is the former chairman of the Liberal National Executive Finance Committee. He is also president of a company called Harris Steel. He said:

"I am going to vote for the Conservatives, and if they ask me, I will give them money."

That shows the depth of his feeling as a former Liberal about what he thinks of a Party that would speak out against a trade deal that secures not only our economy but jobs for Canadian young people and gives us a chance to expand and develop a nation that will allow us not only to penetrate North America but any market in the world. Milt Harris went on to say:

"If we lose this agreement, it will have very dire consequences for Canada."

Let me now refer to a Member who is presently in the House of Commons and chose to leave the Liberal Party to sit as an independent. Don Johnston, a former Liberal Cabinet Minister, said:

"Our position on free trade is indistinguishable from that of the NDP... why would anyone vote Liberal?"

Let me say that Don Johnston has it right. I asked that question 20 years ago: Why would anyone vote Liberal?

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think that as an experienced Member of the House, the Hon. Member should know that to refer to a Member by name is not correct. It should be a reference to his constituency. I