

[Translation]

FREE TRADE

EFFECT OF AGREEMENT ON AGRICULTURE

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, members of the *Union des producteurs agricoles* are having a convention in Quebec City.

Since the president, Jacques Proulx, will take advantage of this opportunity to continue his disinformation campaign, I would like to inform the House of the positive impact our free trade agreement will have on agriculture. This Government has earmarked \$1.5 billion for the dairy industry over the next five years. Subsidy policies will continue to apply to farm producers, whatever their president may say to the contrary. Our subsidy policies and quota systems which are so important for farmers will continue to apply. Our marketing boards will not be effected by the free trade agreement.

I may add that our major processors have not spoken out against free trade, that Lactantia, a company that buys 40 per cent of Quebec's milk production, is in favour of free trade, and that agricultural by-products such as beef will find additional markets in United States.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if farm producers have any business sense at all, they should not protest against free trade. They should challenge their president, Mr. Jacques Proulx!

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● (1415)

[English]

ROAD TRANSPORT

ROUTE CANADA—CLOSURE OF OPERATIONS IN SYDNEY, N.S.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, Route Canada, formerly CN Route, formerly CN Express, closed its operations in Sydney. The federal Government sold what is now Route Canada for less than its value on the understanding that all the closing of the terminals would be done by the new owner, thereby sparing the federal Government from giving the bad news.

Route Canada, the federal Government, and the union took away protection the workers had under the Canada Labour Code. The men in Sydney were dismissed with only two weeks' notice, and the 17 dismissed in Sydney had a range of service between 16 and 46 years. Route Canada has made it look like it just dismissed the individuals when, in fact, it closed the terminal.

The federal Government offered benefits to those workers if they resigned prior to June 1, 1987. But the workers in Sydney were dismissed only five months later, which shows that there was collusion between the federal Government and the

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company because the workers only received a fraction of the federal benefits that the company had to give.

I ask the federal Government to extend the benefit package which expired on June 1, 1987, to the workers who were just dismissed at CN Route.

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MULTICULTURALISM

SUPPORT FOR NEW CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM ACT

Mr. Alan Redway (York East): Mr. Speaker, the introduction in the House yesterday of the proposed Multicultural Act was a milestone in Canadian history.

Wrapped up in the word "multiculturalism" are many different concepts. Of course it means the right to retain one's culture, heritage, and language. But it also includes the concept of getting to know and understand each other better, the concept of equal opportunity for all, and the concept of full involvement and participation in wider Canadian society. It means that you can be proud of your background and that of your ancestors, and at the same time be fiercely proud to be a Canadian.

Multiculturalism is a Canadian creation. It has helped us to achieve stability and social harmony in spite of our great diversity. In doing so, it is the envy of the world.

Multiculturalism is a vital part of what makes Canadians different, a vital part of our Canadian way of life, a vital part of our national sovereignty. The Multiculturalism Act will help to reinforce and strengthen our national sovereignty.

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POLITICAL PARTIES

ALLEGED REFUSAL OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES TO DEBATE ISSUES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, it took the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) weeks to make up his mind, but last week I finally received his official refusal to follow up on his offer, or bluff, shall we say, of debating me in Edmonton on his grant to Fantasyland, and his defence of it here in the House. The Deputy Prime Minister's bluff was called, and he chickened out.

This is part of a growing Tory pattern of refusal to debate, while at the same time talking a lot about being open to such events. The Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) is another good example of this. He states that he wants to debate free trade with Premier Pawley. He can do that after he stabs Gary Filmon in the back and becomes Manitoba leader, having fled the sinking Tory federal ship. In the meantime, he is still an MP, yet he refuses to debate other Manitoba MPs,