

I am not one who believes that if we had freer trade there would necessarily be a diminution in poverty. This would depend upon what Canadians themselves think and do. Certainly the tariff policies of the last 100 years have created great inequities in our country and produced a deep sense of disillusionment and alienation, particularly in western Canada. The hon. member who spoke for the NDP used as an example farm machinery, which has been free traded with the United States for the last decade or so. By and large this has been very advantageous to the farmers, particularly of western Canada.

● (1750)

Prior to the establishment of free trade, western farm machinery was largely bought in Ontario, and to a lesser extent in Quebec. However, the farm machinery industry of Ontario was not oriented or adaptable to the needs of western Canada farmers. Since tariffs have been reduced and since the establishment of free trade in farm machinery, as far as Canada is concerned the market has shifted to Des Moines, but there is growing up in western Canada a sizable farm machinery industry.

Reference has been made to the fact that American tractors below 80 horsepower are not manufactured nearly as efficiently as those imported from Europe, and that therefore only very large tractors are manufactured in the United States, those over 80 horsepower. The reason for this is fairly simple. The wages paid American employees are considerably higher than those paid their counterparts in Europe. Since the amount of labour to manufacture a small tractor is approximately the same as that required to manufacture a large tractor, the difference in price between the two sizes is accounted for by the materials involved in making the tractor. Thus the Americans are forced to manufacture tractors of a large size.

Similarly, Canada cannot hope to have a farm machinery industry of any size that manufactures tractors or grain combines. Therefore free trade in farm machinery has been beneficial to our industry. It has been beneficial to western Canadian manufacturers who have seen growing up a sizable industry to manufacture tillage and cultivation tools, and swathers. This is an area where small companies in western Canada have been able to penetrate the market and have been able to sell as far south as Texas. With free trade the industry in Canada will not necessarily be at a complete loss. I therefore commend the Economic Council of Canada on bringing forward this very timely paper.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, subject to what my hon. friend the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) says, I hope we can clean up this part by six o'clock. There are a couple of matters to which I would like to refer. Again I underline the strictures of my colleague from York-Simcoe regarding the deficiencies in the budget message vis-à-vis the pattern of trade that is now developing.

On the last occasion that we discussed customs tariffs the minister was good enough to give a progress report on the GATT negotiations to date. Six months have elapsed, so perhaps he could bring us up to date again.

Fisheries and Forestry

One matter that my hon. friend from Vegreville and I are very happy about is that the minister has looked after farmers who are now able to harvest their grain in the comfort of an air conditioned cab on a combine. I invite those hon. members who smile to go out on a combine on a hot, sweltering day, coping with the dust and everything, because they would laugh on the other side of their face if they did.

In addition, perhaps the minister can tell us when our patent on aircraft engines is going to change. I think I have heard this message now for about 18 years, certainly more than 18 budgets. When I first came here in 1957 this was one of the items in the budget that year.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Since 1952.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I do not know how long it will continue. There are some petroleum matters I could also mention and some little changes in other items, but perhaps in due course we can have a statement from the minister on the GATT negotiations.

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan Kootenay): Mr. Speaker, I have a few remarks to make on the bill, but since it is about one minute to six may I call it six o'clock?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has only a few remarks, no one wants to curtail him so perhaps we could not see the clock for a few minutes.

Mr. Johnston: May I call it six o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I understand there is a disposition to deal with two items under government business. There are two references to standing committees appearing on the Order Paper as Nos. 22 and 23 under government business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it agreed that the House revert to motions in order to deal with these two items?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

NATIONAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC WORKS

OIL AND GAS—AUTHORITY FOR STANDING COMMITTEE TO TRAVEL IN CANADA AND ALASKA, U.S.A.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council) moved:

That the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works be authorized to study the questions of oil and gas pipelines and the supply of oil and natural gas from frontier areas; that the members of the committee be empowered to adjourn from place to place in Canada and in Alaska, U.S.A., during the month of September, 1975; and that the necessary support staff do accompany them.

Motion agreed to.