

Supply

other steel products. Given that this is what the Americans are doing, and there is no suggestion in any of the discussions that the American Congress would give up its right to impose countervail duties on any particular product which it feels hurts one or other industry in the U.S.A., what reason is there to believe that we can get complete free trade?

What everybody is saying who is opposed to the free trade concept is: "Let's negotiate with the Americans, the Japanese or the European Economic Community in any area on any product, on any manufactured equipment that we produce, and if we can make an arrangement that will benefit both countries, then let us do that." But to talk about free trade as if the Americans are ever going to agree to complete free trade between Canada and the U.S., given their record of the last few weeks, it seems to me is to be talking about pie in the sky.

[Translation]

Mrs. Landry: Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the Hon. Member seem strange to me, because as we very readily realize, the current situation, the status quo has a tremendous negative impact on our economic situation and on our agreements with the Americans concerning our products. This is another reason for negotiating with the United States with the hope of reaching an agreement under which we will no longer be the victims of the protectionist measures that are now the trend in the United States. I think the Hon. Member should agree with me that the status quo is no longer acceptable. We must strive, in the interests of Canadian industries and Canadian jobs, to reach understandings with our American neighbours so that we no longer fall victim to the kind of protectionist measures that are now hitting us.

[English]

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, nobody is questioning that it would be advantageous if we could come to an agreement. Why is it that when the Americans put a countervail duty on our East Coast fisheries because they say we have programs that subsidize our fishing industry, unemployment insurance or support loans at low interest for modernizing ships, nobody in Canada, not the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), not the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) nor Mr. Reisman, the very astute, tough bargainer, says to the Americans: "Just a minute. You are putting a countervail duty on our fish. You have half a dozen programs, loans at subsidized rates for improving the fishing industry, subsidies to build better vessels, you have a whole range of programs"? Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that when the Americans put a countervail duty on steel yesterday, we did not say: "You have a whole series of programs to subsidize your steel industry to make it more efficient, and yet you are saying to us that you are going to put duties on our products that we try to sell to you because we have programs to help our people"? Why do we not say to the Americans: "What are you going to do about the subsidies and the assistance that you give to your industries and workers?"

[Translation]

Mrs. Landry: Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat to my hon. colleague that, as concerns the disagreement which we are now having with the United States, it is precisely by negotiating new procedures that we can eventually avoid the need to provide such compensation for all industries. This is what we are now saying. As for what you said earlier, we are not certain either that these negotiations will be finalized. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) and the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) have both repeated many times that no agreement will be signed if it is not to the advantage of our country and of jobs for Canadians.

We therefore must repeat that we shall sign an agreement only if it benefits Canadians, but there is definitely a need as we are always facing protectionist measures which harm the employment opportunities in Canada.

[English]

Mr. Rompkey: Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on questions from my colleague, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow). I must ask the Hon. Member if this is not an Alice in Wonderland approach. The Americans have just imposed a tariff on fish. We have always had trade with the U.S. As a matter of fact, 70 per cent of our fish goes to the United States. Historically, Atlantic Canada has traded primarily with New England, as my colleagues across the way will know. The Member says we must not maintain the status quo. The fact is that the situation is getting worse. Tariffs are being imposed on fish because the Americans say we have subsidies. The irony is that the last Budget did away with those subsidies. We no longer have fishing vessel insurance. We no longer have fishing vessel subsidies. The Government has made the fishery completely user-pay. It is now charging for environmental forecasts and is charging berthing fees. Everything in the fishery is now user-pay.

• (1710)

The point I am making is that at a time when the Government is moving to user-pay in the fishery and eliminating subsidies, the Americans are slapping tariffs on Canadian fish, which they did not do before. What does the Hon. Member suggest we say to Canadian fishermen? Should we tell them to have faith in the Americans? Should we tell them to have faith in the negotiating process, that the status quo is not good enough and that we are going to get a better deal for them? The fact is that they see their situation worsening and going downhill. What would my colleague say to those fishermen if she were in my shoes and representing them?

[Translation]

Mrs. Landry: Mr. Speaker, as far as our negotiations with the United States are concerned, we say that we must first of all strengthen and increase our markets, but that it is also necessary to implement new structures to avoid incidents such as those mentioned by the Hon. Member. We in the Government also admit that it is unfortunate, but as long as we have