

Government Orders

It would be advantageous to both Canada and Quebec, because we must not forget that, if the United States wants to renegotiate with Quebec, it will surely want to renegotiate with Canada, which will have seven million consumers fewer than when it signed the treaty.

A Canada with seven million fewer inhabitants is not the same Canada. It is not the same NAFTA partner. And if Canada wants to maintain its economic weight in NAFTA, it should sign a partnership agreement with Quebec, because it would be to its advantage and to Quebec's to do so.

According to another of Mr. Martin's arguments, the United States will no longer want to allow new members to have a dispute settlement board. This is a half baked argument and should be quickly rejected because it is based solely on a letter written by a candidate for the Republican Party nomination. Just a letter from a candidate making this claim.

Furthermore, Mr. Martin has conceded that the negotiations with Chile include the dispute settlement board. They are currently negotiating, they have recognized the existence, the possibility of extending the jurisdiction of a dispute settlement board, yet they are telling us that the Americans are no longer interested. How can the Americans want this mechanism for Chile but not for Canada? They are consistent.

This makes it difficult to take seriously the finance minister's statement that Quebec will lose a million jobs and endanger 90 per cent of its exports. Just imagine. This is no laughing matter.

• (1630)

This just goes to show once again that ridicule never killed anyone, because the Minister of Finance would have died a long time ago. We can see how exaggeration often leads to absurdities.

We are proud and happy to participate in Canada's development by supporting Bill S-9, because it goes in the direction that we have always advocated. We do not want to destroy Canada, we want to build a country in Quebec, and we want Canada to remain prosperous as well. We want to live in renewed harmony, no longer from coast to coast but side by side. And the only way to live side by side is to support legislation that will make for more harmonious relations between the two countries.

Witch hunts must be stopped. They must stop telling Quebecers that Quebec is too small, that they cannot administer themselves without help, that they will not succeed in their endeavour. Quite the contrary.

Quebec's history has shown that every time Quebecers have really taken their destiny into their own hands, their endeavours were successful. They succeeded. And when Quebecers will decide, as they will on October 30, to become autonomous and

to make their own decisions, they will be able to collect their own taxes and to sign their own treaties. It will enable them to make decisions on their own and to invest, in projects that better serve the interests of Quebecers, the \$30 billion in tax money they will no longer have to pay the federal government.

The Laurent Beaudoins who come and tell us that Quebec would be too small to meet the needs of large businesses like their should be reminded that countries smaller than Quebec have about 20 and sometimes as many as 30 companies that are twice, three times and even four times as large as Bombardier. Businesses larger than the one run by Mr. Beaudoin manage to prosper in countries like Switzerland, Norway and Denmark. The strength and vitality of a nation is not dependent on its size, but rather on the resourcefulness of its people, their commitment and their self-respect.

Naturally, Quebecers will want to invest mainly in research and development because this creates jobs. The Chinese have known this for a long time. An old Chinese proverb says: "Instead of handing out fish that will feed the hungry only for one day, teach them to fish". Teach people to fish and they will be able to feed themselves for the rest of their lives.

That is what Canada did with Quebec. Only with respect to unemployment insurance were we favoured. Quebecers did get more in UI benefits than they paid into the plan. That is the fish we were fed. Meanwhile, Ontarians were taught to fish, and teaching fishing requires research and development grants, which we did not get. And they thought we would go for that.

[English]

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I have been listening patiently to the member for the last 33 minutes. We are all very sensitive when the separatists speak in the House these days. We do not want to upset them in any way, shape or form. However, Mr. Speaker, at what point in time do you think the member will speak about the bill that is on the floor of the House?

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: I am sure that the hon. member will not be long in coming to the point of his speech.

Mr. Laurin: Mr. Speaker, I thought that what I was saying was very relevant to Bill S-9, since it addresses partnership with another country, the United States. I was therefore attempting to demonstrate that the proposals made concerning other bills before the House deal with exactly the same problem. There was a problem between the United States and Canada. Tax collection was not harmonized, estate taxes were not harmonized.