

provinces. In 1974, we reached agreement internationally, and that was when the Liberal Government was in office, in time of crisis not to cut off a customer who has a valid contract. We did this voluntarily, not only with the United States but with a number of other countries. That is entirely reasonable, because it works both ways. It is conceivable that Canada can have an energy crisis of its own at some point in time as a result of international activity, and we would be the beneficiaries the same as anyone else in the sharing.

We have seen fit to propose in this trade package to add to oil, gas and hydro-electric power. We make major sales of that power to the United States. Interestingly enough, a suggestion was made by a member of the Liberal Party a few moments ago that we are the only country in history that would ever agree to do this kind of thing. I was under the impression that this trade proposal was a bilateral agreement, that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander, that any advantage that might accrue to the United States as a result of an energy crisis would equally apply to us if the market was a problem for us.

Another matter that is raised fairly regularly is what was said in 1983. In 1983, there was a contest for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party. The candidates at that time were asked what they thought about free trade. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), who at that point was seeking the office of Leader of the Party, said that he was opposed to free trade. If he were asked today the same question, in the same context, he would also say that he was opposed to it. What we are proposing here is a form of managed trade. It is a long way from being free trade.

In the summer of 1985, I had the privilege of being a member of a special joint committee of Parliament comprised, as Hon. Members will be aware, of both MPs and Senators. We were asked to do two things that summer. We were asked to travel to all 10 provinces of this country and to hold public hearings into two issues. One was the invitation by the President of the United States to participate in SDI, and the other was to find out what Canadians thought about free trade.

It was very apparent to us, as we travelled across the country, that free trade, pure free trade, was a non-starter. We possess a great many things in this country which we prize and value which are different from the United States. We have no wish to put ourselves in the position of bargaining them away. They include our social programs, our culture, our sovereignty, and various particularly vulnerable parts of our industry.

● (1650)

It was our recommendation to the Government, as a result of our public hearings across the country, that we should indeed carry on with this initiative of trade with the United States. We recommended that we have conversations which should lead to negotiations which may or not arrive at full free trade depending on what was left on the table. If various things

were taken off the table we would clearly not have a free trade agreement but a form of managed trade.

That is exactly what we have. Any attempt to represent it as any other thing is untrue. The Prime Minister said then, and would say now, that pure free trade is a non-starter for this country. I agree with that and that is not what we have.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I have just heard from the Member for Esquimalt—Saanich (Mr. Crofton). Has he read the Bill? It says, "An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States". It is a free trade agreement. If I heard the Hon. Member correctly, he said that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) is still against free trade. Frankly, I am baffled because this is a free trade agreement. The Government says it is a free trade agreement and the Prime Minister says it is a free trade agreement. It is most certainly not a managed trade agreement. It is a free trade agreement and it says so right in the Bill.

I can understand why the Member for Esquimalt—Saanich is trying to distance himself from his Government's free trade agreement by stating that he is against free trade, which is what he just said.

Mr. Crofton: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would appreciate if the Member who is speaking now would make some attempt to describe my constituency properly. She has mispronounced it a series of times.

Ms. Copps: I understood the Speaker introduced the Member as the Member for Esquimalt—Saanich. If he is not the Member for Esquimalt—Saanich I am sure the Speaker can change that nomenclature. I take the correction very seriously but I wish the Member would get back to the main point.

I have just heard a Conservative stand in the House and say that he is against free trade and his Prime Minister is against free trade.

Mr. Crofton: In its purest sense.

Ms. Copps: In its purest sense, yes, that is exactly what he said.

Mr. Crofton: Are you suggesting that this is?

Ms. Copps: This is a free trade agreement. On Bill C-130 it says, "An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States". It is called a free trade agreement and it is a free trade agreement.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton): Nothing is free.

Ms. Copps: I can understand why the Member for Esquimalt—Saanich and the Member for Ottawa—Carleton (Mr. Turner) have to distance themselves because this policy is devastating for their Government. I am also very pleased that a Conservative Government Member has finally admitted