

*Government Orders*

This amendment writes into Canadian law precisely the same measures that have been written by Congress into American law regarding the implementation of the World Trade Organization agreement in the United States. Congress has feared that the WTO will seriously compromise American sovereignty.

We have heard many of the newly elected American politicians talking about their desire to remain an independent and sovereign nation capable of making their own economic decisions for Americans. This sort of statement is something we should be hearing from the front benches of our own government and from the other members in this Chamber who wish to ensure that all Canadians, regardless of their profession, vocation or status in life have an opportunity to succeed with the support of their government in their endeavours.

As I indicated, Congress fears that the WTO will seriously compromise American sovereignty. It has therefore included several clear statements in its legislation to ensure that American law will prevail over any WTO decision. In looking at the American legislation which defines the relationship of the agreement to United States law and state law, in section 102(a)(1) I read this:

United States law to prevail in conflict. No provision of any of the Uruguay round agreements, nor the application of any such provision to any person or circumstance that is inconsistent with any law of the United States shall have effect.

Incredible. Section 102(a)(2) states:

Construction. Nothing in this act shall be construed

(A) to amend or modify any law of the United States including any law relating to:

(i) the protection of human animal plant life or health;

(ii) the protection of the environment; or

(iii) worker safety; or

(B) to limit any authority conferred under any law of the United States, including section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974.

The United States is one of the largest if not the largest trading nation in the world. Again the Americans are ensuring that the agreements they are reaching on the international stage protect the interests of the people within their borders. Surely we in Canada deserve to be negotiating and agreeing to no less.

• (1235)

We are familiar with the behaviour of the Americans under the North American free trade agreement especially with regard to durum wheat which I am very familiar with and softwood lumber which all members of my caucus are familiar with. We can assume that the Americans mean business when they say they will not let any international agreement stop them from harassing the trade of their trading partners if they feel it is in their interests.

It is not that I am trying to say we can learn a lesson from the Americans in this regard. The Americans will defend themselves right or wrong. We know from durum wheat, softwood lumber and other matters that even when they are wrong they will take every measure they can to ensure that their interests are protected and the people whose interests need protecting are supported.

Even in our own case where we know we are right on durum right we caved in. On the Crow benefit, transporting grain to port for sale in the international marketplace, we know we are right to maintain that benefit for our producers. Even before the agreement is signed here in Canada or the legislation implementing the agreement in Canada is concluded, the Liberal government across the way is giving away the Crow benefit.

The government is negotiating right now on the prairies how to change that benefit for Canadian producers. The people who are best served by that benefit are being let down by this government in the absence of even an agreement through this legislation to proceed, whereas our trading partner is going to every length it possibly can to protect its producers even though it is wrong. This is unbelievable.

Canadians have to take note of what is happening not only through this debate but through this whole WTO practice. As we know, in such circumstances we believe it is not only right but also proper for Canada to arm itself with the same legal weapons containing the effects of the WTO agreement until such time as the Americans will demonstrate goodwill in making a rules based trading system work.

The member for Winnipeg Transcona, our party's trade critic, has done a tremendous amount of work on this legislation and has carefully thought through many of the provisions. As a result he has written a letter a portion of which I would like to read into today's record of *Hansard* and for the benefit of all those who are watching. This letter appeared in the *Washington Post* on November 6. I quote the last two paragraphs of his letter:

The apparent failure of a rules-based trading regime is rich in irony. Canadians and Americans, like others around the world, have been asked by the multinationals and their allies in governments to sacrifice considerable national sovereignty over investment policy and social, labour and environmental standards in exchange for this rules-based regime. If it becomes evident that the rules do not work as a result of either American ideological arrogance or American self-interest masquerading as ideology, informed voters around the world may feel that there has been a breach of the contracts their country has entered into through the various trade liberalization agreements. Such voters may demand that their governments try to take back some of that lost sovereignty, until such times as a real global community can be established as an alternative to the moral anarchy of the current "globalization".

In this sense, any American sabotage of a rules-based regime may be the great hope for those opposed to globalization on the terms set out by the multinationals. America may yet be the undoing of free trade, either by harassing others into despair about its sincerity, or by exiting such agreements themselves if they prove to be too effective in cases where fair trade conflicts with American self-interest.