

Is the Prime Minister prepared to implement some of his rhetoric into concrete actions and, if so, what is he proposing to do?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Burney has registered very strongly the objections of the Government of Canada to Secretary Franklin in the United States in regard to what we believe is a side-swipe action, very counterproductive and quite unacceptable to the Government of Canada.

In the past the American industry, having taken this action, that would have been the end of it, but because we have the free trade agreement we have an independent dispute settlement mechanism which has rendered a growing number of decisions favourable to Canada.

Because of the free trade agreement and the independent dispute settlement mechanism, we are able to envisage the future with some confidence in regard to this action as, for example, most recently we did when we won a most important decision on behalf of Canadian agricultural producers on the question of pork.

We view this very seriously. We are going to take all vigorous action and we are going to join with the industry and support the industry throughout the process until Canada emerges successfully from this.

Mr. Steve Butland (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of the Prime Minister's comments, but I thought the free trade agreement would guarantee access to the American steel market as it had promised.

There is the so-called free trade agreement and the so-called Prime Minister's friendship with the President, but the American President pays no attention to Canadian steel workers, no attention to softwood lumber workers, no attention to Canadian auto workers and no attention to the Prime Minister.

• (1440)

Will the Prime Minister place yet another telephone call to the President and, if that fails, will he assist Canadian steel producers for the first time in preparing counterdumping actions against American steel producers?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not think this will impress my hon. friend because he is clearly not concerned about this part of it, but it is important for the record to note that this action

was not initiated by the administration. It is an action initiated by the American steel industry.

I think my hon. friend would acknowledge that it would be improper for the Government of Canada or the Government of Ontario to interfere to preclude the possibility of a Canadian company initiating a trade action against the United States. This is not one that is initiated by the political administration of the Government of the United States.

That being said, we still think it is a side-swipe action where they are looking for others, particularly for example the Koreans, and they are side-swiping Canada where we have the largest integrated steel market in the world.

The American administration will work with the administration of Canada to make sure that we are not subject to these side-swipes.

Failing that we fortunately have the dispute settlement mechanism of the free trade agreement which is providing, as my hon. friend knows, an increasing number of very substantial victories that otherwise would have been lost.

My hon. friend, given his own experience in this area, has expressed his satisfaction in the past with the existence of this important provision.

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Youth unemployment across Canada is at an all-time high of 16.8 per cent, compared with the rate of 11 per cent in the general population. The figures are even more tragic in my province of Nova Scotia where youth unemployment is at 22.6 per cent.

My question for the minister is simply this: What is he prepared to do to get these young people working?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague knows, the general programs of employment and immigration obviously apply to unemployed youth.