

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

and which did arise in the past when we did not have this kind of mechanism.

Mr. Speaker, with this agreement, unlike the situation we had in the past, we now have access to the biggest market in the world with a potential of 250 million consumers, where our farmers will be able to export more and more of their products, and I am thinking of our pork and beef producers who obviously endorsed the free trade agreement we have today.

● (1920)

[English]

Mr. McDermid: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister. The Leader of the Official Opposition is going around telling people in Canada that the free trade agreement is the sell-out of Canada. He also says that it is the give away of Canada. He says that we will become the fifty-first state, and so on and so forth. He says that anyone who supports this deal is really giving Canada away or selling Canada to the United States.

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister, who is a resident of the Province of Quebec where there is great support for the free trade agreement, if the people of Quebec feel that Premier Bourassa, because he supports the agreement, is a traitor to Canada, is selling out Canada, is giving Canada away to the United States? Or, does he expect that Quebec will become part of the United States if this agreement goes through?

Mr. Cadieux: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. No one in the Province of Quebec, and I am sure no one in Canada, thinks that Premier Bourassa is a traitor, to put it in the words of my hon. colleague, with respect to the free trade agreement or any other matter. As a matter of fact, on the contrary, I believe that the Premier of the Province of Quebec, like most premiers of the other provinces, thinks that this agreement is not only good for Canada but good for the provinces and the regions. I am sure that if Mr. Bourassa supports this agreement it is because he feels like so many other Canadians that it is good for the nation. Since my colleague referred to the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I would like to take this opportunity to read to the House a quotation that I would have given a little later in my speech had I the time in which to do so. It is from a former Minister in the previous Government, Mr. Regan, who stated:

When I was Minister of Trade . . . in Mr. Trudeau's Government . . . I sought to move in that direction by initiating free trade talks with the U.S. on a sector by sector basis . . . I have come to the conclusion that the present free trade project is a more meaningful . . . courageous . . . and important undertaking than our more limited negotiations.

Obviously, we are moving in the right direction. We have obtained an agreement which will favour all Canadians from all areas of the country and which will give an opportunity to all Canadians to participate in the growing economy of Canada and to obtain better jobs either for themselves or for their children in the future. One thing to which the Government has been committed from the outset is to bring back the

economy of Canada the way it should have been before—the way it is now.

[Translation]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could ask a supplementary question, further to the one I just asked the Hon. Minister who was praising his Prime Minister's free trade agreement.

I wonder if the Minister is aware of the statement made by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture—and I must remind him that the UPA is a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture—that: "The CFA believes that Bill C-130, to implement the free trade agreement, threatens many sectors of Canadian agriculture." And further on, "It has a negative impact on the marketing system and the future of the quota systems, the whole marketing system of the Canadian Wheat Board, quality standards for Canadian agricultural products and the horticultural sector."

I wonder if the Minister is familiar with this statement of July 30, 1988 signed by the National Council of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. How does he react to this statement? Is the Canadian Federation of Agriculture completely "out of it", or "fallen in the potatoes" as we say in French? Have these people been completely misled, as the Government Members claim the Members of the Opposition are?

Mr. Cadieux: Mr. Speaker, I would never claim that the UPA is "out of it", as my hon. colleague would have me say, although of course potatoes are an important crop. I would certainly not claim, as my hon. colleague would have it in his statement, that the UPA is "out of it". On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, I think that the UPA in the past has shown its knowledge, and usually great understanding of agricultural issues.

It seems that the UPA has taken a position this time that is not shared by all the associations that have something to do with agriculture. Mr. Speaker, coming from a constituency with many dairy farmers, I am told that despite what the UPA says, the free trade agreement is not only beneficial for these farmers, but they are obviously satisfied with the proposed safeguards in the Free Trade Agreement. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, they are even more pleased to have guaranteed access to the American market of 250 million consumers and they are especially pleased as well to have the threat of unilateral protectionist measures, which the United States used to take, removed by the free trade agreement.

[English]

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to say a few words this evening about Bill C-130 and the free trade agreement which the Bill implements. It is obvious to everyone in the House and in the country that this agreement is of historic importance to Canada. The question is: Will the ultimate impact be positive for the parties to it, namely, Canada and the United States?