

*Supply*

Following on the lead established by the FTA and carried forth in the MTN, Canada seeks, in the NAFTA, a trade dispute settlement procedure that is rapid, that follows clear and fair rules, and that is cost effective and accessible to the Canadian business sector. Trade disagreements, while they only involve a small percentage of the total trade between nations, can develop into major irritants if countries do not have at their disposal a fair and impartial method of settlement. As we know, before the FTA, we did not have one.

As was noted earlier by my colleague opposite from Winnipeg, who said, "Well, the dispute settlement mechanism is not any good", we did not have anything before. Yes, maybe we can end up with an even better one. Certainly we have taken it out of the political realm. As you know, the U.S. political scene is special interest driven, and it was special interest politically driven in the decisions that we were getting through the U.S. commerce department, and there was no other place to go. Now we have an impartial tribunal dispute settlement mechanism that certainly has proven already, in a couple of instances, to be beneficial to Canada.

Before closing, I would like to lend my support to one of the themes raised by the Prime Minister in Question Period some few days ago. In answer to a question, the Prime Minister noted that the government felt strongly that the NAFTA afforded Mexico the opportunity to further its development goals. Mexico's President Salinas has said, on more than one occasion, that Mexico would prefer to reach its development goals through trade rather than through foreign aid.

Again, I am surprised at the NDP putting together such a motion. It is for helping the down-trodden and for people who need help and helping them. Here is an opportunity to help many people in the country of Mexico to raise themselves up economically through a free trade agreement on a North American basis. I am very surprised that it would not be supportive of that, to help them raise themselves economically.

In ending, I would like to say that I have, in this debate, attempted to explain some of the benefits that will come to Canada as a consequence of our participation in the North American free trade negotiations. I would hope that all members of the House would come to an understanding that Canada's future lies in securing a prosperous place on the stage of international trade.

**Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science):** Madam Speaker, I just want to congratulate my colleague for the rather sound and principled speech that he has put forward on this important question that was placed before the House.

I also want to congratulate him on his reluctance to move too deeply into some of the comments that we heard from the previous two speakers. It shows great control on his part, control that I am not at all sure that I have available.

I have heard the comment again about water. My goodness, how many times must we go around that issue? They tried it in the election of 1988 and it did not work, and it is not going to work now.

Then we had the old chestnut again raised about medical costs being somehow challengeable under the FTA. Everybody knows that is not so. You cannot challenge a universal program available to all under that. Even if you could, Madam Speaker, the costs rung up by our American colleagues in most of their major industries for health insurance is far, far more expensive and therefore challengeable than costs to Canadian corporations.

• (1500)

The member opposite should know that and get off this business of once again trying to frighten those people in Canada who need that kind of protection, particularly the seniors. I find it almost despicable that we are into this again.

I congratulate my colleague for not being quite as vigorous on this matter as I am.

**Mr. James:** Madam Speaker, I do not know if there was a question there from my colleague, but there certainly was a comment. I would like to comment on his comment.

I was reluctant to even respond to this business of water. I am a little surprised because I have the feeling that the members of the Official Opposition have altered their position because of a conference they had over in Hull some time ago. Perhaps some people told them they were a little off base. The free trade agreement is important and it should be maintained. Now they are