

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

are placed in the same situation. When is a proper compensation package going to be put together for them, such that they can take comfort from the fact that they have some means of support in their retirement years?

Many of the soft fruit growers in my region are looking to a means of supporting themselves in their retirement years. They have put everything they have into their farms, and they now need some assurance from this Government that they will have something to look forward to in their golden years.

Bill C-2 is not defensible. It is legislation that my constituents cannot live with. It is legislation which my constituents have asked me to speak out strongly against.

If amendments were allowed, I would propose an amendment to the following effect: For greater certainty, nothing in this agreement shall be interpreted so as to adversely affect Canada's social, cultural, environmental, agricultural, and regional development programs, nor impair any future federal or provincial Government in designing new policies and new programs in these fields.

Without an amendment along those lines, Bill C-2 is unacceptable to my constituents, unacceptable to British Columbians, and unacceptable to all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Jacques: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for recognizing me. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to my constituents in Mercier for their support during the last election. I would like to assure them of my renewed, complete commitment and co-operation on matters of concern to them. I am very proud to represent them for another term.

[*English*]

I wish to congratulate the Hon. Member for Vancouver South on his election as Speaker of this place. As well, given that I will be, this evening, putting forward my views on the Free Trade Agreement, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate our former colleague, Pat Carney, and the Hon. Member for St. John's West on the work that they have done in connection with the Free Trade Agreement.

[*Translation*]

On November 21st, the people gave us a mandate to implement the Free Trade Agreement. "Let the people decide" stated the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Chairman, we now realize that during the elections the people decided. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to tear up the agreement. But the people decided on November 21st, and on a majority basis. They proudly and enthusiastically welcomed the Free Trade Agreement. The people know full well that new initiatives are needed to ensure significant economic growth.

Mr. Chairman, this agreement is in Canada's best interests. Through trade negotiations, we will make our trade secure, give it more scope. Some 20 per cent of Quebec's products are exported abroad, 75 per cent of which to the United States. Further, 250,000 jobs are directly or indirectly linked to Quebec's external trade. It is therefore of prime importance, Mr. Chairman, to open up borders between nations, and more particularly between Canada and the United States.

The elimination of tariffs and non-tariffs barriers imposed by the United States will benefit the Canadian and Quebec economies. Improved and enlarged access and the security provided by a long-term trade agreement, will create a climate under which the private sector will invest in Quebec. Those investments will involve very modern, world-scale facilities directed to the over-all North American market. This will result in an efficient and dynamic economy.

Let me take as an example the petrochemical industry, mainly based East of Montreal's limits, in my constituency of Mercier which harbours 49.8 per cent of that industry's jobs. The petrochemical industry also is active in the constituency of my colleague for Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies (Mr. Corbeil) and the constituency of the Hon. Member for Verchères (Mr. Danis). That industry will see a significant difference when the reduction of tariffs leads to increased exports and the industry's profitability. Canada is the major supplier of petroleum and refined petroleum products to the United States, with deliveries upwards of 750,000 barrels a day.

Mr. Chairman, several industries in my constituency will undoubtedly benefit from the Free Trade Agreement: Union Carbide, Pétromont, Kemtec and Soligaz. Soligaz is planning to export over 75 per cent of its production to the eastern United States. When the Free Trade Agreement is implemented, 15 to 20 per cent of the tariffs will fall. That will be very good.

Free trade means better jobs, better opportunities and better prices for thousands of Canadians. The Agreement opens the door to new challenges and new opportunities.