

Adjournment Debate

numerous regions were linked to fisheries and helped improve the local facilities.

People who were receiving unemployment insurance benefits and who no longer do also tried to participate in that program. Those people are not eligible because they could get UI benefits and, in fact, many of them were already receiving such benefits. The case of people whose employment opportunities are limited is being reviewed by the Department of Employment and Immigration. Interested parties can contact their local employment centre to see if they are eligible to other programs run by that department.

[English]

BUY CANADIAN

Hon. Alan Redway (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I do not know about you, but regularly I get complaints from my constituents about plant closings, manufacturing job losses and Canadian businesses moving to the United States.

What can we do about it? Some say we should cancel the free trade agreement. Others say scrap the GST and others like the Minister of National Revenue say we should tax Canadians who cross-border shop.

The United States also has its plant closings, its manufacturing job losses and its businesses moving to other countries. In fact, between June 1991 and January 1992 there were some 350,000 industrial, retail and service jobs lost in the United States. General Motors is laying off some 74,000 American employees and closing 12 United States auto plants; IBM is reducing its American staff by some 40,000; 22,000 American jobs are disappearing at Pan American Airlines.

It did not just start recently. Between January 1989 when the free trade agreement went into effect and December 1990 the U.S. lost one million manufacturing jobs alone.

Were these American job losses the result of the free trade agreement, the GST, cross-border shopping or a made-in-Canada recession? I hardly think so.

What then can we do if we are truly concerned as Canadians about Canadian manufacturing job losses? Clearly there is one obvious answer at least and that is to

buy Canadian. If you buy Canadian and you buy a Canadian-made product you create income for other Canadians to spend. Unlike the Americans and the Japanese, Canadians too often forget that their jobs depend on their Canadian neighbours having jobs as well.

• (1710)

Obviously, in addition to individuals buying Canadian, there is a role for government too. Back in 1962 the Ontario provincial government, under the then Premier John Robarts and an initiative started by the Hon. Bob Macaulay, there was a buy Canadian campaign. It is time that our government instituted a campaign like that as well. Also, it is time to publish a list of the companies that actually manufacture goods in Canada.

A few weeks ago I asked the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs if he is prohibited by the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement from initiating a buy Canadian campaign. He did not answer my question at the time. I hope he does tonight because Canadians are watching and listening carefully.

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to my hon. friend's question is no, there is nothing in the free trade agreement to prohibit such a campaign being carried out any more than there is anything to prohibit the United States from carrying out a buy American campaign.

Mr. Redway: Are you going to announce one tonight, Jim?

Mr. Edwards: The hon. member asks me if I am going to announce one tonight. I regard my hon. friend as a free enterpriser and I think that the appropriate thing is that Canadian industry and the Canadian consumer associations have a role for themselves to play in this regard, rather than having the heavy hand of government intervene.

I do not believe that buy American campaigns in the United States are sponsored by the United States government. I believe that they have their origins among the consumers and perhaps even among unions. Trade unions would be a very appropriate vehicle for that.