

them during the election campaign and several times afterwards. I promised them as their representative that I would uphold their views. Now, today, considering what newspaper editors have to say, what the Manufacturers' Association and the Opposition are telling us, what will we do about that decision? Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that even though it does not suit me, there is justification for that decision which was made by a Minister who has assumed his responsibilities, who, and I witnessed that personally, has listened carefully to all those concerned with the sector, and who is saying: Now, 55 per cent of Quebec's production, for instance, consists in women's and girls' shoes. Approximately 50 per cent of Canada's production consists of women's and girls' shoes. The quota which have been in place for a number of years do not seem to work, or they have worked to the extend that the Canadian Import Tribunal, after having conducted a study . . . it was not commissioned by us but by the previous Government. The results of the study commissioned by the previous Government have been submitted. In that context, the Tribunal is telling us that manufacturers should be able to compete in four categories.

Moreover, we have had regional development programs which were successful. I have in mind among others the CIRB, the Canadian Industrial Renewal Board, in which this Government has reinvested \$63 million to allow it to fulfil its mandate as promised. However, Mr. Speaker, to return to more immediate concerns, those of my area, I repeat I am not totally satisfied with that decision, but, good grief, one is seldom totally satisfied with any decision, even less so in this House.

The Santana factory, in my area, which I consider as one of the best makers of footwear and winter boots, makes shoes for women and girls. Ninety per cent of its production is in that category of products. It will, therefore, get a protection for a period of three years.

The Fanec Company, with some fifty employees, also makes women's and girls' shoes and will also get the protection. The same is true for Becwith-Bemis and American Biltrite which make components.

Which means that in my own area, if I consider my immediate interest, some 90 per cent of the production is made of women's and girls' shoes.

What is more important, Mr. Speaker, the Minister has demonstrated both wisdom and vision by announcing at the same time that, to improvise as little as possible and because it is concerned about workers' interests, the Government had set up adaptation programs. That is a major aspect of its decision.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, we should not overlook the fact that there remains a 23 per cent custom tariff on footwear generally. We can appreciate this tariff when we realize that the average for the manufacturing industry in Canada is approximately 9 per cent. I think that the average is 9 or 10 per cent both in the United States and the European Common Market.

Mr. Speaker, what disappoints me most in this debate is the lack of straightforwardness on the part of Opposition Mem-

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bers on such an important issue and constant harping about jobs. I think for instance of my hon. colleague, and I should be quite surprised if all Members of the Official Opposition agreed with this motion which was moved today and cast their votes on this motion. I need only think of the Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) who, in 1981-82, was openly against a quota system for the footwear industry, just as he was against a great many other things. Now that he is in the Opposition, things have changed. They have come to realize that. It is like for the workers in the textile and clothing industry. They never mentioned them at the time; now, they have just discovered them. Well, between 1974 and 1984, 35,500 jobs were lost in Canada in the textile and clothing industry. Yet, not a word. All these jobs disappeared, and they never raised a finger. But now that they are in the Opposition, they suddenly wake up and realize the situation, when they have no responsibility . . . It is easy to blame the Government without ever offering any alternative solution. They suddenly discover that there are workers in the textile, clothing and footwear industries.

I doubt whether the footwear workers will ever forget that in 1981 the Member for Shefford was not on their side when he was in a position to make decisions but refused to do so. I also think that the footwear workers should also know that the Members of the Official Opposition cannot all be in agreement. It is impossible.

This morning, I was sent a speech made by the Hon. Member for Saint-Henri-Westmount (Mr. Johnston) in Vancouver where people are generally in favour of free trade. He said:

[English]

I made a personal submission to the Macdonald Commission at the time I was Minister of Economic and Regional Development and Science and Technology in the Trudeau Cabinet. In it I said:

[Translation]

And then the former Minister referred to the facts, he spoke about free trade and our trade exchanges with the United States and other countries. And God knows this is at the core of today's issue! Well let us hear what he said to those people in Vancouver, to the Vancouver Board of Trade as recently as on November 22:

[English]

One of the most basic choices facing Canadians is whether to remain an outward looking trading nation fully participating in the international economy, or to go in the direction of self-sufficiency and protectionism.

[Translation]

And this is what we are discussing today.

[English]

I have no difficulty with this choice nor do I think that Canadians have much doubt where their longer-run interests lie. The benefits of international trade are simply too apparent and outweigh the cost of adjustments to change in world markets. What I believed then I believe now. Macdonald has corroborated that view.

That is what the Hon. Member for Saint Henri-Westmount (Mr. Johnston) said last Friday in Vancouver speaking against protectionism to the Vancouver Board of Trade while on