

Supply

significant amount of business from other countries in the world that need their CF-5 aircraft upgraded.

• (1800)

Not much more than six or eight months ago Western Star Trucks of Kelowna, B.C. was awarded a \$200 million contract to provide DND with 2,750 trucks and shelters over the next few years. This contract provided over 350 jobs for the Kelowna area and maintained an existing industry probably longer than was initially expected.

I would like to talk about a couple of specific projects close to home in Manitoba. One is the Centre for Biodiagnostics which was announced a while ago. From what I understand, on Monday a representative of the government will be out to officially open the biodiagnostic centre. This initiative is a three-way co-operative effort, with western diversification putting some funding into the project, the National Research Council putting in a third of the funding and private industry putting in a third of the funding.

Within a very short period of time I think that we will find that the centre in Winnipeg will probably be the international centre for biodiagnostics in the world.

Another favourite project of mine which I believe eventually will be somewhere in western Canada and which will provide over 400 jobs, but is in the research and development stage right now, is that of Meadow Materials. Meadow Materials has taken it upon themselves to do research into how to take silica sand, which is a very significant commodity within the riding of Selkirk—Red River, being probably the supplier of the best silica in the world. Western diversification is working with Meadow Materials and the Manitoba government in doing the technology improvement so that silica sand along with apparently other materials will be able to make silicon metal. It seems very simplistic in a statement but the estimated job opportunities when the project comes to completion is well over 400. When you come from a community such as Selkirk—Red River 400 jobs in that area is very significant.

I commend the western diversification people for their efforts in making that actually happen.

To sum up, I have made comments about how maybe things are not exactly perfect here and although I do not think they are that significant, some of the decisions that

we have made in government have not been perfect or idealistic. What I would like to put to the members opposite is that I think there are times when the government does do a good job and does come up with progressive thinking and provides jobs and opportunities in a very progressive way.

I guess what I am asking is that the members opposite sometimes give credit where credit is due.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, we might have forgotten in the last 18 minutes or so that my friend and hon. colleague opposite said that we had been excessive in our criticisms of the government and in fact we were well on our way to Utopia. That is what he said “well on our way to Utopia which could be accomplished if this government was re-elected”. He said, Mr. Speaker, I know you heard it because my hon. colleague on this side heard him say that there was an awful lot of nit-picking that obscured the pursuit of the ideal perfection of the universe in Canada under the hegemony of the Conservative government. I suppose the last time we came so close to Utopia was during the recession when we lost 29.7 per cent of our manufacturing jobs. I guess it is true we have not yet achieved Utopia since so far this government has cost only 25.5 per cent of our manufacturing jobs through its free trade agreement. Just to put that into context, Utopia so far has cost us 510,000 manufacturing jobs.

In the 1981–82 Liberal Utopia, 270,000 jobs were lost. In fact only about 22 per cent of those were permanent job losses. Under present circumstances, the loss of 510,000 jobs in manufacturing in this Utopia constitutes 65 per cent of permanent job losses.

Just to give you an idea of the practical impact of that, six plants have closed in Windsor in the last two weeks, and nearly 40 plants have been lost in Windsor alone in this Utopia since 1989.

Others have cited the practical effect on ordinary human beings. We know there is a crisis among young people in this new Utopia and I do not want to be nit-picking. I do not want to nit-pick but I guess it is nit-picking to tell the hon. member we have an unemployment rate among youth of 17.7 per cent right now. That is almost 18 per cent unemployment among youth. There is a drop-out rate of 30 per cent among youth and also a 40 per cent illiteracy and innumeracy rate.