

Extension of Sittings

Personally, I would gladly hear more about the motives, the rationale and the possible impact of the deal. I was here all week long, from early in the morning until the last hour, and I listened to everybody. I learned a lot, but what I heard repeatedly from the Government side was mostly that one must have faith. I would like to say to the Government Members that I indeed have faith. I do have faith in my Parliament. I do have faith in free trade. However, as far as this trade deal is concerned, you could give me a chance to listen to your arguments. I would also appreciate hearing those of the socialist party and having a chance to listen to my colleagues. To sum up, I would like to be able to go back home and to explain to my constituents that such and such a clause is a good one or that another one is weak or harmful. So I wish I could do that. For the time being, however, I cannot, because of the procedural problem, Madam Speaker. I cannot do that, because nobody seems willing to sit down with me or rise in the House to provide me with explanations.

Often what I hear, Madam Speaker, is nothing but gibberish and shouting, which astonishes me a lot. I am still looking for substance. I have not found much of it to this day. I have heard a lot of noise. Sometimes, the House reminds me of the Granby Zoo. When I look at some of my hon. friends opposite—I hope they will take it in good part, Madam Speaker—I think they look like a bunch of trained seals making a lot of noise and swinging their arms about.

I am sorry, Madam Speaker, but I am much more eager to hear arguments than noise and sounds. I hope that next week the Government will give me and my colleagues—I mean all Hon. Members, including even the learned and experienced ones—the possibility to hear arguments in full, that we may vote in confidence and follow the dictates of our conscience. The important thing is for one to be able to vote according to the dictates of one's own conscience. I know that it is necessary to inter-pact matters in accordance with one's Party, but it is a question of trust and conscience.

In view of the fact that this is my maiden speech in the House, Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciate the kindness of all the Hon. Members who are now present in the House. I wish them to know that I appreciate their courtesy and attention. I find the Hon. Members sitting in front of me most gracious and I thank them for listening to what I had to say. I promise that when I have an opportunity next week to listen to them, I will

act likewise, pay very close attention to their arguments and extend to them the same courtesy of not talking during their speeches. I want to be able to tell my constituents that I voted on the basis of what I learned, understood and according to my conscience.

• (1940)

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Madam Speaker, since this is the first opportunity I have to speak since November 21, 1988, I would like first to congratulate all my Conservative colleagues who succeeded in conveying the message of this Government from one end of the country to the other. Our party is the only one representing all of Canada and for that I congratulate my Conservative colleagues.

I also want to congratulate some Liberal colleagues who owe their election to their own personal qualities since their party's program had neither content nor good sense. Among them are good people. So I congratulate them also and will abstain from making any comment about the third Party that sit on my right here in the House, Madam Speaker.

I also wish to thank the people in my riding of Lévis who elected me with a 50 per cent stronger majority compared to that of 1984.

I must tell you, Madam Speaker, that the people who elected me represent, and this might surprise some people, the union movement. During the last campaign, union leaders made speeches in my favour to the detriment of the socialist party candidate. They came out in support of the policies of my Government because they realize that, under this Government, jobs are being created and that jobs provide their livelihood, their weekly pay. I also got the support not only of business people, of workers, of consumers, but of major cooperative institutions like the Mouvement Desjardins, which manages assets of \$35 billion. I therefore got the support of the co-operative movement.

I also got the support of senior citizens who understand that pensions are here to stay provided that the labour force can go on making money. There is nothing sinful about making money. The men and women in the labour force, people who are 30 to 65 years old, have to make money to pay for senior citizens' pensions, to pay for young people's education and to help those who are permanently or temporarily in need. I got the support of senior citizens.