

under the threat of countervailing duties, Canada's social and regional development programs will come under pressure.

We on this side of the House believe that this will lead to a gradual erosion of these programs. That is the greatest threat of all under this agreement. If the Tories had any brains at all, they would have sought a specific exemption to make it absolutely clear that social and regional development programs were exempt under the agreement, especially when we look at historical claims by the Americans that these programs amount to subsidies.

• (1810)

Looking at this agreement from a Winnipegger's perspective, perhaps one should not be surprised that the Tories would sleep while regional development programs are eroded. After all, regional development in the Government's eyes is just another cynical means to buy votes. We in Winnipeg know about the Government's lack of commitment to regional development. Again I refer to the CF-18 maintenance contract. We in the Province of Manitoba, particularly in the City of Winnipeg, had the opportunity to strengthen the aviation industry on the Prairies, to develop a diversified industrial base in a part of the country which suffers the effects of the boom and bust cycle inherent in a resource and agricultural based economy. The Government turned a blind eye to that opportunity. That was the case even though the Winnipeg contractor concerned won the contract on an equal footing with its competitors. With the lack of commitment to regional development shown in the CF-18 contract, little wonder regional development was not specifically exempted under the trade agreement.

On the question of social programs, we know all too well the Government's lack of commitment to pensions, unemployment insurance and medicare. As you know, we watched the Government try to deindex pensions during its first term. That reflects its commitment to social programs. Those who fear the erosion of these programs may rest assured that we will defend them at every turn. We will watch over the negotiations on the subsidy definition very, very closely.

We should also ask ourselves why the Government did not get specific exemptions for social and regional development programs. Maybe we should not be surprised that the Tories would place the fortunes of the brewing industry above those of seniors struggling to make ends meet. Not that I was unhappy to see the

brewing industry exempted, but I think seniors deserve a better break from the Government.

We on this side of the House insist on a specific exemption for social and regional development programs. It is our duty to do so, placed upon us by the millions of people who supported us and oppose this deal. We cannot stand by while the Government endangers the social safety net which we on this side of the House have worked so hard to construct. We do not wish to see the erosion of social programs as we have witnessed in the fiefdom of the Prime Minister's ideological mentor, Mrs. Thatcher, who so eagerly rushed to his assistance during the last election campaign. In fact, it was interference in Canadian affairs.

Is this agreement another step by Canada away from the caring society that we on this side of the House built toward a Thatcher Britain where two countries now exist? On the one hand you have the wealthy region surrounding its largest city in the prosperous south, and on the other the impoverished north. Is this our model of the future, regional disparity and a growing gap between rich and poor? We on this side see the warning signs. We do not like them and we are going to fight on.

Again on subsidies, what will be the fate of such programs as PFRA, ERDA and the Agricultural Assistance Act as well as the Western Grain Stabilization Act? Those programs are of specific concern to westerners whose economy is still to a large extent reliant on agriculture. All those programs are in the annex to the agreement. All will be negotiated over the next five to seven years. Our support systems will be brought into line with theirs. Our supply management system will be endangered.

From a westerner's perspective, we are concerned about the question of resources in general, including the question of energy. Producing provinces have always held dearly control over their resources as a means to enhance development of their economies. Indeed, the transfer of control over resources to the western provinces was one of this country's first regional development programs. We in the West are certainly not keen on guaranteeing the supply of our resources to the Americans. Indeed, it is surprising that the Americans were given secure supply over energy without anything in return. The United States of America will merely take all the oil and gas Canada can supply, provided it cannot get it cheaper elsewhere. Furthermore, we have virtually abandoned the goal of energy self-sufficiency by committing ourselves to share our oil and natural gas even as our supplies become depleted, this with no