

*Government Orders*

To refresh your memory, Mr. Speaker, the Maquiladora program is the free trade zone in Mexico that will be covered by this bill which allows workers to work at jobs for \$3.61 for a whole day.

**Mr. Nicholson:** Nonsense.

**Mr. Barrett:** Nonsense? Is my dear friend denying that the whole direction of the continuation of Canada's desire to participate in the U.S.-Mexico talks is an attempt to give Canadian branch plant economies with U.S. dominated corporations capital greater access into the Maquiladora program and limit jobs here in Canada?

Is the member not aware of the fact that 160,000 jobs have been lost because of the cupidity or the stupidity of this government in not demanding the same kind of standards that exist in the European Community?

**Mr. Lewis:** Cupidity?

**Ms. Copps:** They may be a lot of things, but cupids ain't one of them.

**Mr. Barrett:** You are right. Cupid ain't one of them. Cupids are hard for a lot of us at our age to appeal to, Mr. Speaker, but Cupid certainly was not at the table when these guys were taken for a little love walk by the Americans, and now by the Mexican talk.

**Mr. Dionne:** They're stupid.

**Mr. Barrett:** I do not want to call them stupid. That is an interjection. That is unfair. I deny that I would endorse their approach as being stupid. However, there are some people in this House who could make a stronger argument than I can on this very point and define it as stupid. Far be it for me to inhibit their definition. If they feel strongly that it is stupid, I can understand the passion in their definition.

• (1640)

Can you give me a better word, Mr. Speaker, that permits me to explain to the Canadian people why we must lose jobs in Canada to the Maquiladora program, why plants like Gillette, like Toro and others must close in face of an agreement that has sold out Canadian businesses and Canadian working men and women and is competing with low cost in the horizon wages from Mexico? Why? Who are they serving? What masters are dictating the sinister proposals behind this almost innocent afternoon of debate around this bill that has been

stalled before it was brought forward, as the point made by my colleague.

**Mr. Dionne:** U.S. administration and big business.

**Mr. Barrett:** U.S. administration and big business, even they are not responsible for interrupting the potential call in this House of tax credit legislation for the 60,000 people who are waiting for the government to fulfil that promise, but that is an aside, Mr. Speaker, because I was rudely interrupted. Perhaps I was not rudely interrupted, but wisely interrupted.

Here is the point that I make, Mr. Speaker. This government has made no effort whatsoever to protect working men and women, as the European Community has, on a level playing field based on the words of that member, to fit with a uniform system of rights. On the contrary, the government's introductory remarks deny the existence of uniform rights. All that this government is concerned about is allowing labour to be used as a commodity at a low price level to compete with Mexican workers who will be exploited by American capital.

This is the continentalist's dream and they are trying to hide it in this legislation. The continentalist's dream is having U.S. capital, Canadian resources and cheap Mexican labour. Is this the way for us to go? It has simply nothing to do with the European Community because the European Community has specifically entrenched rights in legislation that will be passed in the year 1992.

If this government were serious about the definition given by my colleague and using his words again, the uniform system of rights, let us have an assurance from the government that it will, as an addendum to the existing Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, pass an exact replica of the rights that are enjoyed by low wage areas in Europe. They should be covered by this bill on the same basis.

It is not fair to Canadians to have this government allow itself to be propelled by some bureaucratic myth that somehow by us passing this bill in the House, that all of the shortcomings of this government in its trade negotiations will be corrected. They will not be. As a consequence, in my very brief time, I am making an appeal to understand exactly that this government is trying to give the impression, while it is late in catching up with the modern bureaucratic strictures needed to deal with international trade under the United Nations,