

Government Orders

When you look at Statistics Canada and use four years before the trade deal and the four years after the trade deal and take average trade balances, you find that 1988 was in fact the last positive trade balance that this country had with the United States and since January 1989 when the trade deal came into effect, we have had nothing but negative balances.

On average, the four years before the trade deal we had a positive trade balance of \$4.8 billion, with goods providing a positive net balance of \$17.3 billion, services a negative balance of \$12.4 billion, leaving a positive position of \$4.8 billion. On post-trade deal, goods on average for the four years provided a positive trade balance of only \$15 billion, down \$2.1 billion from the average before the deal started. On services our negative balance went up from \$12.4 billion to \$18.2 billion, leaving a negative trade balance with the Americans in all goods and services of \$3.15 billion.

• (1615)

The trade position with the Americans has deteriorated considerably since the implementation of that agreement. Part of the reason that that has happened is fairly obvious. There were 222,000 fewer employed Canadians between January 1989 and August 1992 according to the labour force survey of last August. An additional 600,000 Canadians have joined the official unemployment rolls since January 1989, pushing the unemployment rate from 7.6 per cent in January 1989 to 11.6 per cent or 1.6 million people unemployed.

It appears that there are an additional 344,000 discouraged unemployed individuals who have simply dropped out of the work force since January 1989 as well.

The proportion of the work force working part time since 1989 has jumped from 15 per cent of the population to 17 per cent and 386,000 more Canadians in August 1992 compared to August 1989 are now working part time because they cannot find full-time work. It has been noted many times by many economic observers that since the trade deal was signed part-time work seems to be the only new jobs that are available to Canadians.

This has had a tremendous effect on our efficiency and our productivity levels. According to the OECD statistics the Canadian economy is currently operating 9.2 per cent below its productive potential. To arrive at produc-

tive potential they measure such factors as existing capital stock, labour efficiency and a Conservative measure called the natural rate of unemployment.

By comparison the U.S. is operating at 3.6 per cent below productivity potential and Japan is only .4 of 1 per cent below its potential. We are further below our productive potential than the economy of any other major industrialized country since 1960.

The policies of the government which put us into a trade deal with the Americans have in fact been to blame. When we look at the various sectors and the negative effect on those sectors we see that in the furniture sector 22,700 jobs have been lost, 33 per cent of all the furniture jobs that existed in 1989 have now disappeared; 12,395 textile jobs have disappeared or 22 per cent of that entire sector; 41,600 clothing jobs have vanished, 35 per cent of all the jobs that existed in the sector before the deal started. This is a dramatic shift in the amount of jobs that are available in Canada.

In auto parts, 19,950 jobs have gone, 22 per cent of the sector has disappeared since January 1989. In printing and publishing, 23,373 jobs disappeared, 15 per cent of that work force no longer exists.

In spite of the facts that are there, produced by Statistics Canada and available to all of us if we look, the government persists in telling us that is a good deal, that it is good for Canada and good for Canadians. You cannot convince anybody who is looking for a job that it is a good deal. You cannot convince anybody whose plant has closed down and set up again in the United States that it is a good deal. You cannot convince anyone who finds that the products that they used to be able to produce are no longer being produced in their local town in their corner of the country. Yet the government tells us it is good for us.

• (1620)

The purpose of this bill is to make some of the services that are available to exporters more flexible and to provide them with the kinds of services that will allow exporters who exist all across this country to go into other parts of the world other than the United States. For that reason I think it shows a softening of a number of the government's positions, which I applaud.