

Supply

to the Hon. Member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke (Mr. Hopkins).

I have been a Member of Parliament for 15 years. There is no way that any Member of Parliament will be an authority on all subjects. One must do research and listen to the experts.

In November, 1982, the then Liberal Government appointed a royal commission to study the economic union and development prospects for Canada. Three years and \$24 million later, the Macdonald Commission presented its report which overwhelmingly recommended that Canada pursue free trade with the United States. The New Democratic Party is suggesting that these people are wrong and do not know what they are talking. That is absolutely ridiculous.

In March, 1974, the Liberal dominated Senate standing committee on foreign affairs was appointed to study Canada-U.S. relations. Eight years and over 100 witnesses later, the committee presented its report which overwhelmingly recommended that Canada pursue free trade with the United States.

Members opposite talk about plunging into this agreement. That is simply not the case. It will be phased in over 10 years.

If members of the NDP are correct in saying that this is a terrible and disastrous deal, I do not understand why the Canadian Manufacturers' Association would be supporting free trade. They are the ones who will be affected and know more about it than I or, especially, the NDP.

In the November 1987 issue of *The Canadian Manufacturer*, the President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Mr. J. Laurent Thibault, stated:

The CMA supports the agreement and will continue to work closely with the federal Government to further improve the relationship with our most important trading partner.

He further stated:

It offers the opportunity of continued increases in our standard of living while removing many historical tensions between western and central Canada. Canadian consumers will be clear beneficiaries through lower prices and increased choice of goods.

These are responsible people who are in the business. They know what they are doing. Therefore, I will listen to them and support free trade. If we had received a document from the CMA saying it is going to be a complete and total disaster, I would have great difficulty in supporting this free trade proposal.

• (1710)

Mr. John Bulloch, a very responsible Canadian and businessman, has great knowledge of business affairs in this country. He is the President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. He stated recently that securing access to the United States market is essential to the long-term viability of Canada as a participant in a fundamentally changing world economy. This idea that we are going to sit still and do nothing is not going to work.

While appearing before the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on November 3, 1987, Mr. Bulloch said that the main interest of small business in the trade deal is the removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers. That will be done over a 10 year period. He questioned his membership of 41,789 owners of small and medium-sized businesses, and the result was five to one in favour. Am I going to tell Mr. Bulloch he does not know what he is talking about? Am I to believe that these 40,000 business people are all wet, that they do not know what they are talking about? That is just absolutely ridiculous. More than five to one predicted the impact would be either positive or neutral. Mr. Bulloch pointed out all the reasons why it will benefit Canadian business. If it is going to benefit Canadian businesses, manufacturers and all the rest, it is going to be creating more employment.

I will listen to the experts. I am afraid I cannot accept the arguments that I have heard from the New Democratic Party today.

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, I have just a brief comment in response to the Hon. Member. First, he should know, as we all do, that some industries have expressed real concern about this agreement. As far as the Canadian Manufacturers' Association being in support, is concerned, it might be good for the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. What I was saying is that it is not good for Canadian workers. It is not good for the shore workers of British Columbia. It will not be good for the fisheries workers of Atlantic Canada. We can look at a number of industries right across Canada and find the same thing.

The Hon. Member for Yellowhead said in 1983 that it was not going to be good for textile and furniture workers. I would like to read from the well-known Conservative George Grant who wrote *Lament for a Nation*. He said:

Capitalism is, after all, a way of life based on the principle that the most important activity is profit-making. That activity led the wealthy in the direction of continentalism. They lost nothing essential to the principle of their lives in losing their country. It is this very fact that has made capitalism the great solvent of all tradition in the modern era. When everything is made relative to profit making, all traditions of virtue are dissolved, including that aspect of virtue known as love of country.

Mr. St. Germain: Mr. Speaker, I have a very brief comment with respect to the attitude the New Democratic Party assumes, which is virtually anti-American. I would like the Hon. Member for Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands (Mr. Manly) to really put his case forward as to whether or not he feels we can compete with the Americans. I think if he really sat down and studied the Province of British Columbia, he would realize that the reason the 15 per cent export tax was placed on softwood lumber is that we were much too competitive for the Americans. The industry in the United States took action against our Canadian industry.

The Hon. Member spoke of Scott Clarke from Scott's Cedar Products. He cited the fact that there was an adjustment due to the 35 per cent tariff on shakes and shingles. He read from