

S.O. 21

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—BENEFITS OF FREE TRADE

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, some Liberals, the NDP, and some labour leaders are trying to frighten Canadians by saying if we have free trade with the U.S. the Americans will dominate us, or we will lose our sovereignty, or our social programs will be in jeopardy. Such statements are sheer nonsense.

The Canadian red meat industry has had, and still has, virtually free trade with the U.S. in finished products. We have not lost one social program. We have not lost one iota of sovereignty. We have not dominated. In fact I know of no adverse results, only benefits for Canadians and Americans. The Western Stockgrowers Association supports free trade with the U.S. as well as the rest of the world.

As the Irishman said: "When we get free trade I will be thankful for the rest of my life, if I live that long."

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THE DISABLED AND THE HANDICAPPED

EFFECT OF PUBLIC SERVICE LAY-OFFS

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, there are several hundred disabled persons employed by the federal Government who are currently being cut through the public service freeze and downsizing actions of the Government. Most of these people are in term positions, some after going through the Government's Access Program for Disabled Persons. Several have already received notice of the Government's intent not to renew their terms, some as early as March 27 of this year.

The Government committed itself not to hurt disabled people and make the Public Service of Canada more representative of target groups. You will be interested to know that of the six employees in the Minister of State's Department's program for disabled employment opportunities, two are disabled and both are about to be terminated at the end of this month. If the Government has a real commitment toward the disabled, those are the last people who should be attacked in its fiscal restraint program.

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YOUTH

PROVISION OF PROGRAMS

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State (Mr. Bouchard) is wrong when he claims that he needs weeks and months before he can produce a policy on youth employment. The Minister had time during the whole of 1985, during Youth Year, to prepare a policy for youth. A whole year. Yesterday on *Cross Country Check-Up* he had the nerve to say that he needs more time to come forward with something. In addition, while he had been warned that the

Senate report was going to recommend projects like Katimavik in the future, he still had the nerve to kill Katimavik.

● (1415)

The Secretary of State said there is no money to provide youth programs. The money was found for the Nielsen Report which cost millions of dollars, it was found to bail out the banks which cost hundreds of millions of dollars. We are asking the Secretary of State—

Mr. Speaker: Please, 60 seconds.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF NEW ZEALAND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

Mr. Speaker: May I draw to the attention of Members the presence in our gallery of the Hon. Colin James Mole, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of New Zealand.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

NICARAGUA—AID TO CONTRAS—PLEA BY UNITED STATES PRESIDENT

Hon. Donald J. Johnston (Saint-Henri-Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I note the Secretary of State for External Affairs is not in the House. I hope he would be, given the summit beginning today. In the absence of the Prime Minister I will go to the Deputy Prime Minister. Is the Deputy Prime Minister able to tell us what the Government's response is to President Reagan's national television message to Americans last night? What is our response to his plea for increased aids to the Contras in Nicaragua?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): The immediate response, Sir, is that the activities of the U.S. Congress on this question are a purely domestic affair. It would be inappropriate for there to be a response. Having said that, let me repeat what the Secretary of State for External Affairs said on the thirteenth of the month as reported at page 11507 of *Hansard*:

—Canada can advance that progress—

That is the process of seeking a peaceful solution in Nicaragua—

—best by pursuing and strengthening the Contadora process, as we have been doing, and by resisting the temptation to reduce our influence in the United States and elsewhere by offering gratuitous advice which we can neither defend nor enforce.