

The Address

university experts have been forming a coalition against the North American free trade agreement.

The AFL/CIO has come out solidly in opposition to the agreement presently proposed. There is a new organization formed partly by workers who have lost their jobs in places like Pittsburgh in the steel mills called the Federation for Industrial Retention and Renewal. It is using American legislation, spreading across the country and organizing opposition to the closure of plants. Sometimes they win and sometimes they lose, but the movement is growing.

Of course the North American free trade agreement is not the whole story. President Bush wants to extend it down to Tierra del Fuego as well.

Four years ago, when this sort of thing was just being hinted at, I met the vice-minister of planning in El Salvador and asked him: "What are you doing about unemployment?" He said: "That is why I wanted to talk with you. We want you Canadians to invest in our cheap labour". Those were his exact words. He speaks good English, and I wrote his words down at the time.

"You have lots of wood in Canada. Send it down here. We will make toys and furniture. We will sell them in the United States. We will get the wages and you will get the profits. Cut the pieces of the jeans, send them down here to be sold. Same thing. That is what the Caribbean Basin initiative is all about".

As I was leaving, he said: "Bring my regards to Sinclair Stevens". Apparently his staff had not told him that we have different opinions among different parties in Canada.

I was at a meeting a few weeks ago in the Caribbean with the Socialist International Parties of the Americas. People from the Caribbean, Central America, South America and North America were there. In the south they were particularly working out local integration, as they called it; in other words, means of defending themselves against the onslaught of the trans-nationals from the north. Generally there was discussion of opposing the North American free trade agreement.

There is a growing international movement, and what we need are trade agreements that are fair to labour. Do not force the farmers off the land to create more unemployment. Give education controlled by the people

who do the work, need the education and know what they need. The disposition of the capital should be shaped by the workers who created it and who know that we need that capital so they can continue their work and improve on their work. This is the kind of free trade agreement we need, not the kind that the Prime Minister has been promoting in which he gives such fantastic rosy pictures in his throne speech.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the hon. member always pertain to the current situation, and I only wish to add some comments.

Last Friday the Quebec Liberal caucus of senators and members of Parliament, which I have the honour to preside, met with the *Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de Montréal*, at its invitation, to examine the dramatic reality of Montreal's economic situation. The great speeches of a former president, a distinguished Quebecer, the hon. Jean Marchand were brought to mind. He used to say that Montreal's economy was a reflection of that of Quebec. What he was saying then is still true today.

Today, I simply want respectfully thank those who have invited us and organized such an opportunity for exchange in Montreal. Mr. Sylvio Gagnon, president of the *Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de Montréal* and Mrs. Monique Simard, the ever popular vice-president of the CNTU. The whole thing was coordinated by Mr. Bégin, in charge of the aggressive campaign against recession led by the *Conseil central de Montréal*. We will get back to this topic soon when we have the opportunity to discuss Montreal's economic situation.

Together with my colleagues from the Quebec caucus in Ottawa, I want to thank them for the warm reception. I am sure these exchanges will lead to a new co-operation. I want to address a question to the member. Is he fully aware of the dramatic situation of Montreal's economy? This is my first question.

Second, I would like him to try, with his usual sensitiveness but in his own way, to inform Canadians about the differences between Montreal's economy, a city which is the mainspring of the Quebec province, and Toronto's economy, the city he has represented brilliantly such a long time.