

We also have to look to GATT with respect to subsidies. We have to look to GATT as the place where we can work out, with other countries, some agreements which see to it—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McKinnon): Order.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, I remind you that my two colleagues from the other Parties had two hours each, so if I stray just a little bit over—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McKinnon): I regret to inform the Hon. Member that his time has elapsed for questions and comments. If he desired more time he should have asked for unanimous consent of the House when he finished his 20-minute speech. We have now gone past that stage. I regret very much that I must continue with debate.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, I think it is still possible to ask for unanimous consent to finish this answer in the next five minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McKinnon): Is there unanimous consent for the Hon. Member to have five minutes more to finish his comments?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McKinnon): I heard a negative. I will call on the Hon. Minister of Labour on debate.

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, in 1984, Brian Mulroney stated that his Party was committed to four priorities. One of these was economic renewal. Today, I am proud to inform Canadians that the Government of which I am a member has kept its promise. By signing a historic trade agreement with the United States, Canada has obtained the best guarantee for a prosperous economy. The free trade agreement is the culmination of over twenty-five years of hard work by Canadians and Americans aimed at improving and strengthening the framework of their commercial and economic relations. It was high time the Canadian Government adopted a comprehensive view of the economic changes that were taking place. Canada had to get a head start in the race in which countries the world over were competing, and the best way to do this was to gain secure access to the biggest and richest market in the world: the United States. We all know the arguments in favour of signing a trade agreement with the United States. About 80 per cent of our exports go to the United States, representing sales worth around \$180 billion annually, while one out of three jobs depend on our ability to export our products.

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The growth of our external trade is therefore closely linked to the trade relations we have had and have today with our

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neighbours to the south, something our predecessors understood. In 1879, Sir John A. Macdonald shared this comprehensive vision of Canada's economic future, witness his trade policy. In 1911, the desire of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Government to establish a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States reflected the economic realities of the time.

These are only a few historic facts, but there are many others. Thanks to the testimony and experience of our predecessors we are able to understand our own economic realities, and we will be able to build a future in the image of this country.

When in September 1985 we decided to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement with the United States, we knew what we were doing. We were not only mindful of our country's growth as a trading nation, we were also acting on a unanimous recommendation by committees and commissions of inquiry, including those of the Senate and the House of Commons and the Macdonald Commission, whose members represented all groups in our society. Need I recall, Mr. Speaker, that there was a Liberal majority in the Senate and that the Hon. Donald Macdonald was a Minister in Mr. Trudeau's Government?

Despite all these recommendations, the Liberals tried to ignore the lessons of history by involving Canada in a multilateral trade policy, while our trade with the United States continued to increase, from about 65 per cent to more than 75 per cent, and it did so despite the liberals' so-called nationalist policies and their rhetoric about their so-called third option.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the same Liberals would have Canadians believe that the same multilateral free trade process would give Canadians the same advantages as a trade agreement with the United States. What they do not tell Canadians, Mr. Speaker, is that the free trade agreement will enable Canada to control protectionist spillovers from the United States caused by domestic reaction to a budget deficit they have trouble keeping under control.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind these free trade detractors that Canadians are not being fooled and understand quite well that the Liberal Party does not offer a valid alternative to the accord.

Here is what Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa said in a press conference last August 16:

With respect to the issue of negotiating on a sectoral basis we have to take into account the various GATT regulations . . . We did get the Auto Pact, of course, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure GATT approval to negotiate on a sectoral basis with another GATT country.

Canadians understand as well that they will be able to prosper in the 21st century if today they are prepared to look to the future and face the greatest challenges with vigour and determination. They are conscious of the fact that Canada's economic prosperity basically depends on the ability of our industries and our companies to maintain and improve productivity.