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## House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m.

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leaders limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] for 5 minutes.

### UNFAIR TREATMENT OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the House's attention a very serious matter faced by fruit and vegetable growers not only in my district, but also throughout the country.

When NAFTA was enacted 3 years ago, its leading proponents promised the new golden age of expanding trade opportunities with vast new markets for U.S. businesses to tap into, creating new jobs and capital and investment in our economy. When I and many other members of the Florida congressional delegation raised concerns with the administration regarding the potentially adverse impact that NAFTA would have on our State's fruit and winter vegetable growers, we were told not to worry, our farmers would be protected.

Here are two examples of the protection promised to our farmers during the debate over NAFTA's enactment: First, Mexican tomato imports were placed under a tariff rate quota, which would be phased out 10 years after enactment. Under this provision, if imports exceeded a certain amount during a fixed period of time, a tariff of 25

cents per 25-pound container would be imposed.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the drastic devaluation of the peso this tariff has been rendered entirely useless. Given the devaluation of the peso, Mexican growers have enormous incentive to sell as much of their product in America as they possibly can, and the so-called safeguard tariff provisions have done absolutely nothing to stop the flood of Mexican produce into the United States market.

Second, protection for U.S. growers was promised through a clause placed in the NAFTA implementation bill which allowed U.S. vegetable growers to seek provisional relief from suspected dumping actions through adjudication from the International Trade Commission. Unfortunately, as we all know, the ITC not only refused to consider Florida growers' concerns, but it also failed to conduct the monitoring of trade conditions that it was mandated to do.

Once again the promise of a mechanism to ensure equitable treatment of U.S. growers proved to be nothing but an illusion. This unfair treatment of U.S. agricultural producers is very troubling, but the problems with NAFTA go beyond the injustices done to America's farmers.

The problems with NAFTA pose a direct threat to the health and well-being of Americans who consume products imported from Mexico. Mexican agricultural products are grown in circumstances that fall far below the standards that American growers are required to meet under Federal and State laws. The production and harvesting of much Mexican produce takes place under conditions that can only be described as unsanitary and unsafe.

Last week the news was filled with stories about the schoolchildren around the country who apparently contracted hepatitis A because they consumed strawberries grown in Mex-

ico. Given the disgustingly filthy conditions on many Mexican farms, this sort of incident should come as no surprise to anyone. Daily, thousands of trucks enter our country from Mexico and our customs agents, border guards, and Food and Drug Administration officials make only token efforts to inspect the produce flooding in from Mexico.

So under NAFTA as it is now being implemented, American consumers are being exposed to unsafe produce and American farmers are denied the protection against unfair competition they were promised.

To add insult to injury, the Mexican Government has been blocking the importation of American agricultural products into Mexico. Presently, the Mexican Government has in place so-called sanitary and phytosanitary restrictions on the importation of our fruits and vegetables. It has taken 3 years for the cherry producers in Oregon and northern California to get these restrictions lifted on their crop, but despite our best efforts we have seen no movement on Florida fruit and vegetable imports into Mexico.

Why can Mexican agricultural products enter the United States with great ease while citrus produced in Florida cannot be sold in Mexico? It makes no sense. It cannot be justified, and it is time for it to end.

Mr. Speaker, the deal we are getting under NAFTA is not the deal that we were promised in 1993. This is not a level playing field. NAFTA must be made to work for everyone, for all of our industries, not just a select few, and in this fight we need the support of Congress and the administration. As Congress begins the debate over fast-track negotiations and the accession of Chile to NAFTA, we must ensure that the interest of all Americans are protected.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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