

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. McDermid: I did not say "improper".

Mr. Hovdebo: That is disrespect for the Chair, Mr. Speaker. These motions were ruled proper and acceptable by the Chair. Therefore, they refer directly to the Bill and can effectively be used to amend it. They do not change the direction of the Bill. Perhaps, when these particular amendments were written, we neglected to put in one clause. Instead of saying "for greater certainty" at the beginning of each of these amendments, we probably should have said "because nobody trusts the Government, for greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall do these things". That is exactly why these particular amendments should be in the Act, for greater certainty, so that we know these things cannot happen. The Parliamentary Secretary made a great to-do about the fact that they are not put in treaties. That might be the case where they can be negotiated at a later date. However, in this particular case we would like to be sure that these things are not going to happen.

The Indians and Inuit have gone through a long, slow process establishing their right to land, their right to self-government, and the rights that came out of the treaties. There is no assurance in this Act that those rights will not be affected by the free trade deal.

Mr. McDermid: The Constitution guarantees it.

Mr. Hovdebo: One of our friends in the Indian community suggested that the free trade deal would put everybody in the same category as the Indians find themselves now, as far as this particular Government is concerned. In negotiations Indians may find themselves defending their self-government against the United States instead of against the Government with which they presently negotiate.

Because nobody trusts this Government or trusts the negotiations with the United States, Motion No. 9 states:

"7. For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be interpreted so as to apply to lands, resources, and waters claims by aboriginal peoples under an aboriginal claim."

Why should that certainty not be put into the Act? Why should we not agree that aboriginal people need that type of security?

Again, because we do not trust the Government, Motion No. 10 states:

"7. For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall affect programs to protect the environment or conservation of land, resources and waters."

The Parliamentary Secretary suggests that those types of things are not put into an Act. However, in the next few years the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States will be establishing how and what are considered subsidies. There is no certainty, by what is presently contained in the Act, that a subsidy given or made available to a company in order that it can contribute to a cleaner environment, or that it can follow the environmental rules and laws that we put down or may put down in the future, will not be considered a subsidy and put those companies at an unfair

advantage, or that it would be accused by the United States of having an unfair advantage because it is receiving support to contribute to clean air or a clean environment. Why should we not put in the Bill a clause saying "for greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall affect programs to protect the environment"? As soon as those programs or that protection, programs which attempt to protect the environment, are considered subsidies they become unfair advantages for Canadian companies.

• (1150)

Turning to Motion No. 11, because nobody really trusts this Government and nobody trusts this agreement, for greater certainty, adjustment programs to help firms or workers adjust to change brought about by the implementation of the agreement should be recognized in the agreement. For instance, areas are already being affected by the agreement. The grape growers of British Columbia and Ontario are being affected by the program. This has been admitted by the Government. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has even gone out to British Columbia and said: "We will help you where it hurts". There is no guarantee that the Government will be able to go on helping them after the agreement is in place and after this particular Bill has been passed.

There is no suggestion, no guarantee, that if the Government were to decide in the future to help a victim of this Bill—and there are going to be many—the United States may not take the Government before its panel and say that this is improper. Since we do not trust the Government and since the people of Canada do not trust this agreement, why not include for greater certainty, a guarantee that these things will be carried out?

Motion No. 12 reads: Again, no one trusts this Government or this agreement:

For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be interpreted so as to affect or preclude the continuation of existing or the establishment of new regional developmental programs.

One great fear in more remote areas of the country is the fact that many programs which have done some good in such areas will be considered to be an unfair advantage in the future

Mr. McDermid: Why wouldn't it be now?

Mr. Hovdebo: The Parliamentary Secretary has stood in this House and said that those kinds of programs are in danger, that they are the kinds of programs that we are going to have to look at and withdraw if they affect the ability of companies in the United States to compete with those areas.

Mr. McDermid: When did I say that? Point that out to me. I never said that.

Mr. Hovdebo: That is the basic understanding of this Bill. Anything that is paid to a certain area and affects the production of a product in that area can be recognized as an unfair advantage.