

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

The damage that this is doing to Canadian business and industry is incalculable. They do not know whether they should be getting ready for January 1, 1989, for some time during 1989, or not getting ready at all because of the type of campaign waged by the NDP and the Liberal Party of Canada.

What of the charge that the free trade agreement means we are turning our backs on other markets such as the Pacific Rim and Europe? I will give the answer given by the Economic Council of Canada:

Many believe that freer trade and expanded trade with the U.S. precludes expanded trade with other countries. There is no logical basis for this view. In fact, expansion of our exports sector to serve U.S. customers could well facilitate the economies of scale needed to reach more distant markets.

There is economic sense, logic, and an unbiased view of the Economic Council of Canada created by Liberal Governments to give impartial advice to Canadian Parliaments and Governments. Its advice is in direct contradiction to the opposition canards.

That is the case with the free trade agreement. It will benefit every region of Canada. It will create jobs, it will increase investment, and it will make Canada stronger. It will help us continue our development as a compassionate, dynamic, and distinctive society. That is what it will do.

While it is simple in its principles, the FTA is complex in its application, as we know in the House. It has to be complex because it is so comprehensive. The second major line of criticism offered by the Opposition, after claiming that the FTA sells out the country, and I have dealt with that, is to take the complexity and try to distort and misrepresent specific provisions of the agreement. There is not time for me to deal with all the distortions and misrepresentations. My colleagues will deal with many of them. I will deal with four. The first is the Quebec stock savings plan.

Three weeks ago the Leader of the Opposition stood in the House and charged that the Quebec stock savings plan was inconsistent with the national treatment provisions of the free trade agreement. He was completely and totally wrong. Premier Bourassa had to correct him and set him straight. He cited the sections of the agreement to him and embarrassed him. Never has a Canadian political leader been so embarrassed and caught out so far by a member of his own Party as was the Leader of the Opposition by Premier Bourassa.

I have a clipping here from *The Globe and Mail* of August 17, which states:

Mr. Bourassa warned that he will defend the free trade agreement if it is attacked.

"If there are errors in fact, concerning free trade or other things, I will maintain my position," he told reporters. "Neutrality does not mean inaction".

Premier Bourassa is going to be very, very busy during the coming campaign, because there are going to be many errors in fact spread by the Liberals and the New Democratic Party in their vicious and hysteric attempts to stop this agreement

from going through. So that was the Québec stock savings plan.

• (1210)

On August 17 Mr. Turner rushed to Québec City to try to patch things up with Premier Bourassa. After they had met, Mr. Bourassa said that he would intervene only to correct misstatements as I have just quoted regarding the free trade agreement. He is going to be busy. Mr. Turner was chastened. He looked chastened. He looks very chastened. But, unwilling to let the point go, he said that future stock savings plans would be barred.

He tried to change it and to pretend that he was partly correct. Wrong again. Two wrongs do not make a right. His trade critic and he are speaking. Perhaps his trade critic does not know, either. He is blinded by unreasoning prejudice against the free trade agreement. The investment chapter of the agreement applies only to direct investment, not to portfolio investment. The Quebec stock savings plan is safe. Any stock savings plan is safe. The Leader of the Opposition is not safe. He is running around Canada being criminally negligent in what he says about the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and what he says about the Government and what he says about the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). He is criminally negligent in every word that he says when he is on the so-called campaign trail across Canada.

I advise the Leader of the Opposition to read the definition of investment on page 240 and 241 of the agreement. "Stock savings plans, present or future, Quebec or elsewhere, are not covered by the agreement". We have gone through the same thing on water, on blood. My God, Dracula is on the way from Romania, because there is going to be blood everywhere here in Canada, according to certain members of the Liberal Opposition. Blood is going to be sold. No more free blood.

Mr. Marchi: Political blood.

Mr. Crosbie: These are the kinds of fright tactics that have been raised against the free trade agreement. The second one that I am going to deal with is unemployment in fish processing.

On August 18 the Leader of the Opposition went to Newfoundland and made completely false statements. Incredible. He charged that Atlantic fish processing jobs are threatened by the free trade agreement. Wrong. Article 1203 of this agreement specifically includes controls on the export of unprocessed fish by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P.E.I. and Québec.

He went there and pointed to the fact that both Canada and the U.S. retained the GATT rights that they had before we entered the free trade negotiations, which is true. But, in a statement of administrative action, the U.S. has indicated to us that it will not challenge existing Atlantic fish processing regulations under GATT. So Atlantic fish processing jobs were never threatened. They were made more secure by the FTA.