

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Nova Scotia—might lend to greater access to U.S. markets for Canadian steel products.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Did he vote for you, Elmer?

Mr. MacKay: He probably did, and certainly others did. However, I did not have a candidate of the Rhinoceros Party running against me. Given the way the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition has been skating around since the election, I think it is safe to say that he learned something from that skate-boarding champion.

Coming back to those who have earnestly espoused free trade, I think of the great American President John Kennedy, who in addressing this Chamber—and I believe the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition may have been here when President Kennedy addressed the Canadian Parliament—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I was here.

Mr. MacKay: President Kennedy had some very interesting things to say, some of which bear repeating.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): He said that good fences make good neighbours. That is what he said.

Mr. MacKay: He also said that we share common values from the past. He spoke of our common defence line for the present and our common aspirations for the future; and then he said—and I am sure the Hon. Leader of the Opposition will remember this: “Geography made us neighbours; history made us friends; economics made us partners; and necessity has made us allies.”

I think those words bear repeating today.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Can you give us your own stuff tonight, Elmer; tell us what you think.

Mr. MacKay: Since the Leader of the Opposition has been good enough to ask, let me respond. I think that the Free Trade Agreement that we have concluded with the U.S. is an excellent one.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKay: I think that it is an agreement that is good for the country. I think it will make Canada a more self-reliant, a more prosperous, a more outward-reaching nation.

If we might make comparisons again—and I apologize for going back into history this evening. However, I

do think that there are lessons to be learned from making comparisons.

Let's look for a moment at Argentina, a country that in many ways resembles Canada. It is a country that, in the 1930s, had about the same GNP as Canada then had. It is a country that, sadly, has been betrayed in many ways by its politicians.

Argentina, like Canada, is a country that does not have access to a large trading bloc. It is a country that has the same kinds of resources that we do: Wheat, oil, cattle. Argentina is a country that is looking for a future. Canada, because of its proximity to Europe, our relationship with the U.S., our history, has far outstripped Argentina. But, we still need access to global markets.

I ask the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): This is your own stuff, Elmer, so I am prepared to listen.

Mr. MacKay: I know that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition does not like to depend upon the “stuff” of other people, but perhaps, in the light of the results of the last election, he should. It may be that had he had more than one issue during the last election campaign, his Party would have won more seats. But then again, perhaps not.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): We didn't do too badly in Nova Scotia.

Mr. MacKay: The people of Nova Scotia are, of course, very tolerant. It is a province that reacts—

An Hon. Member: Slowly.

Mr. MacKay: —that reacts more positively, and perhaps more slowly. Had the polling day been one week later, there may be even more Members sitting on this side of the House.

An Hon. Member: Or a lot more Liberal seats.

An Hon. Member: Don't you bet on it.

Mr. MacKay: The people of Nova Scotia, partly because of economic policies espoused by centralist Governments, have become dependent upon payments of various types, on subsidies, with the result that they were more receptive than they perhaps should have been to some of the allegations that were made during the election campaign.