

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

In no way does this deal protect traditional government programs for regional development. Will the free trade deal help in regional disparities in Canada? Liberal Leader John Turner gave an indication during a speech in Halifax in December, 1987:

If access to the U.S. market is going to solve regional disparity, why hasn't it solved regional disparity in North Dakota or Montana or Idaho or Mississippi? They have access to that market and they had since then joined the union and they still face very dramatic regional disadvantages.

I could stand here all day and go on about the issues involved in this debate, but I realize my time is limited.

In conclusion, as the Member of Parliament for Cardigan, Prince Edward Island, I recognize the importance of international trade. Our agriculture and fisheries, to name but two of our largest resource industries, depend on international markets. The Liberal Party has always supported more liberalized trade, but certainly not this deal. This trade deal is bad for Canada.

Canadians are proud of their culture and heritage and Prince Edward Islanders are doubly proud. Prince Edward Island is the birthplace of this great country.

I was elected to represent the people of Cardigan who voted overwhelmingly against this deal, and I pledge to uphold this right.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the Speaker on his re-election to the House. Members are grateful for the sentiments expressed so eloquently by the Member for Vancouver Centre (Ms. Campbell) in her maiden address to the House last week. I join with her and all those who have paid tribute to the Speaker, to his contribution to our country and to his patience and dignity in bringing decorum and civility to this Chamber.

May I also congratulate you and the other chair officers. Perhaps you will allow me a particular note of congratulations to the Deputy Chairman, the Hon. Member for Edmonton North (Mr. Paproski), who in his 20 years in the House has served Alberta with distinction. That is quite a tribute coming from a guy from Calgary to a guy who played football with the Edmonton Eskimos. I would also like to thank the Table Officers for their assistance, particularly to new Members of this House.

• (1300)

I begin by thanking the people of Calgary Southeast for giving me the privilege of serving them in this, the Thirty-fourth Parliament. Calgary Southeast is a new and diverse riding reflecting the dynamism of a maturing nation, formed from parts of the constituencies, ably served in the last Parliament by the Hon. Member for Calgary Southwest (Mrs. Sparrow) and the Hon. Member for Calgary Northeast (Mr. Kindy), Calgary Southeast has inherited a legacy of exemplary service to Canada. Hon. Members will recall the strong western representation of John Thompson and Peter Bawden, to whom I am grateful for their encouragement and counsel.

My riding has also been distinguished by the service of Carl Nickle, Senator Harry Hays and Arthur Smith who have contributed so much to my native city. Notable too was the representation of the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, former Prime Minister of Canada, and later, by Judge Manley Edwards whose son Douglas, one of my dearest friends, carries on a family tradition of service to our community.

There is a great spirit of pride, of entrepreneurial endeavour, of caring for others and of participation in the community in Calgary Southeast. We shared the pride of all Calgarians and all Canadians earlier this year in the "Best Ever" winter Olympics. We showed the world a friendly, vibrant city, dedicated and determined to strive for and achieve excellence.

My constituents know what they want and are prepared to work hard to achieve their goals. While knocking on over 25,000 doors during the election campaign, the people of my riding told that me they want to participate in the mainstream of Canadian life, that they want to be involved in the making of decisions that affect their lives and that they have the confidence to compete with the best, and over 32,000 voters in my riding said, "Yes, we want free trade".

I have listened, as have all Hon. Members, to speech after speech on the subject of free trade, each Hon. Member's speech reflecting a part of Canada, each providing a perspective of his or her riding, experience and vision of our country. There are differences to which I will refer later, but there is also a remarkable consensus. There is on both sides of the House, both sides of the debate, above the rabble, a sense of fairness and tolerance. It is to be Canadian, to respect the views of others, to consult, to debate and to find the consensus.