

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Hon. Member if his ringing endorsement of rail transportation means that the overnight train service from Ottawa to Toronto, which is about to be cancelled without this Government taking any steps to restore it, is going to be reversed.

Mr. McDermid: Ask him if he rode the goddamn thing the odd time.

Mr. Hughes: Even though I come from the Prairies, I can recognize a red herring when I see one. I would say that that is one.

Mr. McDermid: He has never ridden it in his life. He doesn't even know where the train station is, for Heaven's sake.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, the record may show a totally uninformed allegation made by the Minister for the homeless to the effect that I have never taken the overnight train. I have taken it. However, more important, members of my family use it, and use it frequently.

Mr. Funk: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. Member who just spoke of the train might have mistaken the light at what he thinks is the end of the tunnel for a train coming. There is a joke about a horse, but I will not tell it.

Rather, I would like to speak about the mandate from the West. The mandate the Conservative Party got from the West is restricted to the Province of Alberta. The Reform Party is nipping at the heels of the Conservative Party throughout the West. I think my Leader probably regrets by now having spoken of the two-party system. However, it might be the New Democrats and the Reform Party in the next election if the Government keeps treating western Canada the way it has been.

Mr. Siddon: You have 50 seats in the West. What are you talking about?

Mr. Funk: Twenty-two in Alberta. Take those seats out—

Mr. McDermid: Why would you take out Alberta? What do you have against Alberta?

Mr. Funk: Very little.

Mr. McDermid: The NDP hates Alberta.

Mr. Riis: What have you got against Alberta? You are devastating the economy out there.

Mr. Funk: There has been a lot of talk about mandate. It can be argued either way, that with 43 per cent there is a majority of Members. Yet 53 per cent voted against free trade, which has also been argued here. If the truth were known, neither that side of the House nor this side of the House has the absolute certainty with which we can bat each other in this forum.

After the debate we went through during the campaign, I hoped there would be some movement by the Government to set up a legitimate monitoring process that every Member in the House and every person in the country would have some confidence in, both those who support free trade and those who oppose it. I have not seen any movement toward that kind of monitoring.

If we are to get out of the impasse and the bad feelings that have been created to make this House work, then perhaps some serious attention will be paid to a monitoring process in which some people have some confidence. Hon. Members opposite might not agree with that, but if they have as much confidence in this deal as they say they have then they would want a monitoring process to demonstrate that.

My question is this. The Hon. Member mentioned that there are four Indian bands within the boundaries of his constituency. The Indian bands in my constituency were very concerned about the effect of free trade on their tax status. For example, would that be considered a benefit that could be grieved? They were worried about third party interests when it comes to settling matters such as land entitlements. They had a study done which stated that since they are at the bottom end of the wage scale they would be the first ones to lose their jobs.

What kind of assurances has the Hon. Member received from his own Party that I might pass on to the Indian people in my riding regarding how this deal would specifically affect them?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, if I might just answer one of those 20 questions. The Hon. Member should understand that the fundamental concept behind the Free Trade Agreement is that it does not discriminate against any Canadian. It provides equal opportunity for every Canadian regardless of where they live, whether they live on an Indian reserve in my riding, a small town in southern Alberta, Calgary, Montreal or St. John's East or West, or anywhere else in the country. It provides