

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. McDermid: Not true.

Mr. Manly: It is going to have an impact on our social programs, on our regional programs, because of tax harmonization. It is going to have an impact, and it already has, upon labour standards and wages. I have heard of workers who have been involved in wage negotiations and the argument they have been given is that if they want to protect their jobs, they had better have wages that are comparable to those in the United States.

We are going to be competing with a number of states down in the southern United States which have right to work laws and minimal wages as low as \$1.35. We are going to see a result of this agreement in increased militarization of our economy because national security is exempt from the agreement. The failure of Canada to get exemptions from the U.S. omnibus trade Bill is something that has to be of great concern to all Members in this House. It was of concern to all members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade last fall. They said that if those exemptions were not given, we should not go ahead with this agreement.

I see my time is up. I simply want to emphasize the fact that the Canadian people, including some of those who support the agreement, but definitely those who oppose it, want to see an election on this issue before this agreement is implemented. Therefore, I would move:

That the amendment be amended by deleting the period and adding the following therefor:

"In the context of an imminent general election".

Mr. Nickerson: That is not in order. That is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Schellenberg): I will wait for the amendment to arrive at the chair before a ruling is made. Questions and comments.

Mr. McDermid: I have listened to my hon. friend, and have for some time, because he sat on the trade committee and listened to the testimony of those people who are going to be most directly involved with the trade agreement, the people who create employment and make the economy tick. It is not the politicians; it is the industries, the small businesses, and so on. I listened to this old canard the New Democratic Party keeps dragging out about the mass movement of industry to the southern United States because there are no minimum salaries down there and no trade unions. What I cannot understand is that if it is so great down there, why have the industries not moved already? Why have they not moved *en masse* to the southern United States? I will tell the Member why. The productivity is probably the worst anywhere in the United States. The workforce is not a well educated workforce and it is an unproductive workforce.

I watched three of the governors from those states the Member talks about on television the other day. They are almost bankrupt.

Ms. McDonald: And they have free trade. How can it be they are bankrupt with free trade?

Mr. McDermid: Listen to the Member. Her finest speech is from the seat of her pants. She is marvellous.

Ms. McDonald: Explain it. You say they are nearly bankrupt but they have free trade with the United States.

Mr. McDermid: States in the United States have free trade with the United States? How does that work?

Ms. McDonald: They have free trade with all of them already.

Mr. McDermid: What is the Member talking about? Of course they have free trade with United States. They are part of the United States. I am talking about the Governor of Louisiana, the Governor of Alabama, and the Governor of Mississippi, I believe, who were on television. They are having a terrible financial time. No one is investing down there. The evidence they gave is that no one is investing down there. Three of them are banding together to go to Japan to invite foreign investment into their states because they cannot get people to invest. They cannot get people to invest there because the productivity is no good.

Why is foreign investment coming to Canada? Why are they investing in Canada? It is because of a stable financial situation, a stable Government, and a good outlook for the future. They have now got themselves access to an American market.

Mr. Thacker: We are good workers.

Mr. McDermid: Exactly. That is the key to the whole thing. I heard my hon. friend knock Mr. Reichmann. Mr. Reichmann had a choice. He could have established himself in the United States but he established himself in Canada. Why? He said it was because Americans work hard but Canadians work smarter. We do. We have an excellent educated workforce. We have productivity that is growing. The Member should take a look at what our steel industry is doing. It can compete with any steel industry in the world. Our auto industry produces a car less expensive today than the United States. What I am saying is that the Hon. Member and all his socialist friends stand up here and knock the multinationals, yet he loves big Crown corporations; the bigger, the better. The NDP wants to nationalize the banks and another oil company, yet they knock big multinationals. It is all right if the Government of Canada owns them and the NDP runs them. They love that.

Mr. Thacker: Would they nationalize General Motors?