

Supply

Fourth, can he tell the House if he is aware if the government maintains any kind of list that on the one side he can attribute job gain to the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement and where he can rightfully attribute job loss due to businesses moving perhaps to the United States under the Canada-U.S. free trade? If he is aware of that, can he tell this House and does he think that information should be made available to Parliament? If it is not available, is that not something this government should be doing if it is so proud of the Canada-U.S. free trade so that it can try to prove its point?

Mr. Soetens: Madam Speaker, first I will talk about the North American free trade agreement. No, I have not seen the draft that he has asked for. I do not know which of the cabinet has seen it. To be fair, I have not gone and asked each one of them. Nor have I seen a press release that has indicated who has seen it. However I have every confidence that all of those involved in the North American free trade agreement have seen it, whether it be the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Minister for International Trade. I think that is certainly appropriate.

Does the member believe we should release it to the House and to the public? He has indicated that it is available in Mexico. If he thinks it is important that he see it, I suppose he should call his friends in Mexico which the member from Spadina indicated he had down there. I am sure they would be happy to share it with him. I do not think at this point in the negotiating stage that we need to necessarily release those documents in public. It is not standard practice.

The second item relates to job loss. The member is absolutely right. There are businesses closing. There are businesses opening. Those are functions of the economy. Those are functions of all kinds of factors within the economy, whether they be poor management, whether they be international trade competition, or whether it be simply a drying up of a market. For example, there is not a great demand any more for wringer washers out there. People want automatic washers. Those things are natural in the market.

I have seen a list of extensive new investment decisions in Canada. I do not know if they are simply related to the free trade agreement directly or whether it is because those people have decided Canada is an absolutely great place in which to invest because we have a good Conservative government and good economic policies.

Part of those policies are in fact the free trade agreement with the United States.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Madam Speaker, I want to put this on the record. I would like to correct the member from the New Democratic Party.

Most Canadians know where the Liberal Party has stood on the free trade agreement. People will never forget that during the last campaign that the member of Parliament, our then leader, the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra debated clearly and won the confidence of Canadians on his debating skills when it came to free trade.

Regretfully the Business Council on National Issues and other associations bought full page ads in most of the major dailies saying that some of the things that our then leader said about free trade were not accurate. Those full page ads probably had more to do with this government regaining power than anything else I know of.

However that is history. We are here today and we are about to face another election campaign. The people of Canada should in no way, shape or form think that we are running away from this flawed document.

This free trade agreement is a flawed document. The records show that unfettered, unreviewed foreign investment in this country is not working. Statistics Canada and all the government agencies will show that beyond a shadow of a doubt.

The member for Ontario, for whom I have a lot of respect, said that we on this side of the House have a great capacity to deceive. Well, I want to let the member know that he is right when he cites that there are some winners in this free trade agreement. We have never run away from the fact that there are some winners. But there are a lot more losers and those losers tend to be the smaller and medium-sized manufacturers in this country. I too, like him, was a businessman. I worked for one of the most successful organizations in this country, Magna International. Eighty percent of our business was exports to the United States in auto parts.

We had a very productive labour force and they still have a very productive labour force and they are doing very well. Large companies like Magna, Dow and Dupont—I give them respect for this—only represent about 25 per cent of the employment in this country. A majority of the employment in this country is with the smaller and medium-sized businessman.