

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

introduce medicare to harmonize with us? Who are you kidding? The Canadian system will be harmonized to the U.S. system and we will see a reduction in workers' wages. We will see a reduction in the kinds of social benefits that have characterized a different path for this country. The reason we will see that is because the Government—

Mr. McDermid: The Parliamentary Secretary is back.

Ms. Copps: —is so bent on selling out this country that it will stoop even to the point of setting up commercial blood banks. I do not want my children to have to buy their blood when they grow older. I do not want to have to buy my blood when I am at an age when I might need an operation.

Mr. McDermid: I would not want it either.

Ms. Copps: That is the potential written into this trade deal. Otherwise, why would the Parliamentary Secretary and the Government include commercial blood banks in the annex? It is specified right in the trade deal because the whole mentality of this Government is characterized by the Minister for International Trade who said, what is wrong with selling your blood? If not blood, what is next? Kidneys? Are we going to be selling babies next? Are we going to be selling other organs?

Mr. McDermid: Are there any blood banks in Canada now?

Ms. Copps: As a matter of fact there has been established for the first time under the Conservative Government in 1987 in the City of Montreal a for-profit blood bank. I say shame, and we say shame and we cannot understand—

Mr. McDermid: You mean before the trade deal?

Ms. Copps: —why the Government would want to introduce in the trade deal a specific section dealing with commercial blood banks. It is a hidden agenda and I say to senior citizens, when you hear the Government say your social programs will not be touched, just remember what it said about pensions. The Government cannot be believed and it has to be thrown out, so let's call an election.

● (2110)

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to speak to this very important series of amendments including Motion Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 which call the Government's bluff about the take-over that is provided for in the so-called free trade agreement and in Bill C-130.

The rationale for the free trade agreement is that it will reduce tariffs. In fact, that is a very small part of what the agreement really is about. It is partly about giving American corporations a much freer hand than they now have in taking over Canadian resources and Canadian labour.

With regard to the Bill, these amendments attempt to protect the lands, resources, and waters of the aboriginal peoples from the agreement. They attempt to protect environmental and conservation programs for our own land and water. They attempt to protect the continuation of special adjustment programs for workers or companies which suffer under the

agreement. They attempt to protect the establishment or continuation of regional development programs and they attempt to protect the health and social service programs that we have now and the plans and hopes we have for extending them. They attempt to protect our cultural programs, present and future.

It is doubtful, even if these amendments were written in, that that protection would be given because if the free trade deal is finalized the agreement itself would give American corporations claim to all these things. Even if these amendments were written in we would, at the very best, be tied up in long court battles. The Government probably does not want to deal with these amendments because if they are passed it would be caught in contradiction to the agreement it has signed. It does not want to debate the amendments because it knows the amendments expose the take-over provided for by the deal.

I represent a constituency which has at least six hospitals, many nursing homes, and other health institutions, public and private. I want to speak particularly about the amendment which deals with social services. Motion No. 13 would add to the Bill the words:

“—nothing in this Act shall be interpreted so as to affect the continuation of existing or the establishment of new Canadian social programs, including medicare, unemployment insurance, daycare, pensions, minimum wage laws, labour laws and maternity benefits.”

We are being told, of course that these things are not on the table. We were told that by the same Prime Minister who told us that he would never negotiate a free trade deal with the United States. His statement that these are not on the table turns out to be just as true as his promise not to negotiate a free trade deal with the United States.

In fact, under Article 1402 of the agreement any American firm can claim any rights, benefits, and opportunities in Canada which any Canadian firm has under our laws. There can be no preference given to Canadian firms and no preference given to non-profit services over for-profit services.

Under that article these firms will be able to come into Canada much more easily than they now can. The list of nearly 300 services which are expressly opened up includes the management of a series of health services including hospitals, nursing homes, homes for the aged, homes for the retarded, homes for disturbed children, halfway houses, rehabilitation clinics—

Mr. McDermid: What about homes for disturbed MPs?

Mr. Heap: Someone across the way is worried about disturbed Parliamentary Secretaries. To continue, it includes ambulance services, public health clinics, X-ray laboratories, medical laboratories and, of course, blood banks. The Government made sure that blood banks are open to the United States.