

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Government that gives support to cultural activities across the board. That is undermined by this agreement.

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, I would say it is in jeopardy. I do not say that it is totally undermined. We need a clarification so that we can be assured that the exemptions are there. That is what I called for. I agree with what the Hon. Member said.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Hon. Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone) on her fine intervention. Would she care to comment on the fact that this week we were not given an opportunity to put forward, discuss, examine, and vote upon amendments which could have improved the quality of this agreement in order to protect culture, the environment, and the health of Canadians?

Mrs. Finestone: I thank the Hon. Member for the question. If there is anything that has made me very sad, it is the fact that the Government has used the guillotine procedure called closure. It is totally unnecessary, not in the interests of Canadians, and is only exacerbating the great difference of opinion expressed through the vote.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address Parliament on the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, an agreement whose prime purpose is to manage the future growth of a financial agreement that has recently grown to become of increasing interest to United States politicians who wish to save their political skins by relying on trade protectionism.

During the election campaign in my constituency of Regina—Wascana the New Democratic Party, the Liberal-Communist coalition, time after time attempted to frighten our aging population. The opposition was simply out to scare the people with emotional drama and mistruths. It just about worked. As a Progressive Conservative candidate elected from Regina—Wascana I am the first one to represent these citizens in 26 years on the side of government. It took a very special effort to become elected.

It was a very close election running against a high profile Party and a high profile individual in the form of the previous Leader of the Provincial Liberal Party. He is no more. However, I was supported with an extremely strong and well organized campaign team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those voters who supported my election. I wish also to assure those who chose otherwise that as a result of my election I will continue my commitment to all as I have the past

nine years as mayor of the City of Regina. I commit to the maintenance of a real and genuine concern for the citizens of Regina, my birthplace, my home, and my family's home. I wish also to convey my commitment to the residents of the entire constituency, that of Regina—Wascana, the breadbasket of the world up until this past drought stricken summer.

The recent election campaign is one that I am sure most of Canada regarded with a certain degree of amazement. The campaign provided this amazement in that I am sure that, at least in recent memory, there has not been an election conducted by members of the Opposition who have their statements strongly ridiculed by the media and yet have gone unchallenged. I view this as quite appalling for people seeking public office, to make the kinds of statements that members of the Opposition have made and expect the Canadian public to have any respect for members of those political Parties.

The Opposition said, in attempting to frighten the voters, that in five to seven years our social programs would be considered subsidies. They seem to have this clairvoyant trait that eludes those who are responsible for providing government. They say that five to seven years from now these matters will be singled out and eliminated with some future agreement. If we just listen to that argument, it reaffirms that our social programs are not subject to this agreement. This agreement is what we are signing, not something which is to be determined five to seven years down the road. It is absurd that this agreement should have written into it matters not relative to it.

It is the Opposition's duty to oppose and that it did. They provided opposition to the extent that the media called much of it to task. I quote from an article printed in the *Winnipeg Free Press* on Thursday, November 3. On page 7 the article is headed "How John Turner misleads on trade", and reads:

The Leader of the Opposition has been lying about the content and impact of the Free Trade Agreement. Statements he makes on the subject, almost without exception—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I would just remind the Hon. Member that what a Member cannot say in the House directly should not be said indirectly and I refer precisely to the word "lying".

Mr. Schneider: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I thought in quoting from a news article that was permitted. I will withdraw that. I will proceed: