

*Supply*

My hon. colleague obviously draws the point that if the government had kept its word not only would there be fewer cynics across this country as they look at this Chamber and government, but more Canadians would be working today. We would have a nation more confident in itself in pursuing international trade agreements.

In any agreement there is going to be a shortfall. In any agreement there is going to be an adjustment. Therefore if the population, the labour pool and workers know there is a commitment to keeping those jobs then that nation will be more competent and confident in pursuing and supporting a government that seeks greater trade opportunities as a measure of increased prosperity.

However the country cannot be confident when it has had a major promise, commitment and plan during the 1988 campaign which was basically a referendum on the free trade agreement, which was not kept. Canadians were led down the garden path. That is why in large measure Canadians *en masse* are rejecting the NAFTA. That is why when this government asks Canadians a second time to trust it, regardless of who the leader is, the resounding answer of Canadians will be no.

**Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister for Science and Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)):** Mr. Speaker, I want to look at this motion first of all from the point of view of its over-all scope and then concentrate for a few minutes on the trade agreements.

First of all, my hon. friends opposite know that about 20 years ago I wrote a book on the role of the opposition. I hope they have read it. This book concerned the study of parliamentary democracies and what opposition parties do, what is their function and what is their role. This book was extremely well received by everybody who read it. I distilled three roles for the opposition and all thought these were the roles of the opposition.

Professor Hockin's rite: The first one is to check the government against dishonest action or unconstitutional action. That is the role of all oppositions. I think it is an honourable role and oppositions should do that.

The second role is to prod the government into doing things. In other words, through the constituencies you represent, if you think the government is not doing a job of speaking to them or helping them you should prod the government.

However, the third role of the opposition is to get ready through programs of its own in opposition to govern.

Look at this motion. There is no evidence here whatsoever of constructive thought about the third role of the opposition, which is to prepare to be an alternative government. That is because what is being asked for is all negative. That we must endorse a strategy of abrogating the free trade agreement is just a negative role. That is ripping it up. Not implementing the NAFTA is a negative role. Including actions such as a jobs plan is not a policy but just an expression of sentiment. One says: "I have got a jobs plan". The next question is: "What is it? What is the content of it?" We do not know.

• (1655)

As for an infrastructure program, everybody has an infrastructure program. We have an infrastructure program. We believe in strategic investments in infrastructures such as science and technology. Certain kinds of things can be done with the Trans-Canada Highway and so on. What kind of infrastructure program is being spoken of?

Finally, there is a national child care program in order to ensure job creation. This is a child care program, not to look after children I guess, but to ensure jobs for people. What we have here is an example of an opposition party not fulfilling the third and most important role, which is to ready itself with alternative proposals.

I have seen the NDP document. I have to give the NDP some credit because there are parts of that document that are not included in this motion that are a constructive attempt to come to terms with alternative policies.

This motion does not do it, but some of its program does.

The Liberal party has yet to tell us what it would do as an alternative government. It has more or less positioned itself as being against everything and for almost nothing. I remember it was the famous Liberal Whig politician, George Tierney, in Great Britain in the 19th century who said that the duty of an opposition was simply to oppose everything and propose nothing and throw out the government.