

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

would think that there would be some slight twinge of conscience on their part.

The Free Trade Agreement is not an act in and of itself. The Free Trade Agreement and its implementing legislation do not stand in isolation; they are part and parcel of a new course that has been set by this Government, a course taking Canada away from its historical course, uprooting the traditions, beliefs and feelings we have held about the way in which this country can best govern itself. For some reason or other the Conservatives have seen themselves over the last two years mainly as Republicans. I guess they were sort of influenced through our media by President Reagan or Margaret Thatcher. They said: "Isn't that wonderful?" Not wanting to think about complicated matters, they followed the pattern in a simple way.

● (1600)

That is dangerous because one of the results has been that this country is being divided. This country is divided. One of the ironies is the Prime Minister saying this week: "I am the great conciliator. I am the great harmonizer". I have never seen this country more divided than it is today under that Prime Minister. Not just along traditional language or regional lines but increasingly along economic and social lines.

There is a growing underclass in Canada which feels totally unrepresented by the Government. One million children live in poverty in this country and we cannot get the Government to lift its eyes to pay attention. What is the Government's answer? Food banks. In a modern society, with the belief we have that the public sector can do something, we are prepared to tolerate widespread poverty among our children, and our only answer is to say go and visit a food bank.

That people are prepared to take food to the food banks is a wonderful tribute to volunteerism. My little boy has for four days raided the pantry for Kraft dinner and canned vegetables to go to the food bank through his daycare centre. It is a wonderful spirit. Yet that is not the way we should deal with poverty.

As Disraeli said, this is a country divided into two nations, rich and poor. What is happening here is happening in industrialized societies around the world. It is almost a revolt of the privileged. They are fighting a major action to protect their privileges and power, status and wealth, and they are not prepared to share any longer, and it is the Government that speaks for that privileged class.

Many Canadians are concerned about the role we will play in the world. I found it fascinating that one of the trademarks of the Prime Minister and others during the campaign was to talk about how this trade agreement represents Canada's coming of age, our new maturity in the world. What happened? The week after the election, the Minister for International Trade goes to GATT and gives in to the Americans. He totally adopted their position on agriculture, on trade, and we lost our role as broker. We lost our ability to provide a bridge to Third World countries. The Minister had no interest in Montreal in trying to open up links to the countries of Central or South America or East Asia. His point on agriculture was that the Americans are right, the Europeans are wrong. That is all we have heard from the Minister for International Trade and the Minister responsible for Grains and Oilseeds.

That was a signal. It means the Government is going to start snuffing out our horizons. It is inevitable that over time our horizons will shrink. The signals we send and receive will be one-way signals to Washington. Can you imagine what it will be like ten years from now?

**Mr. McDermid:** When you were in there the percentage of our exports to the U.S. went from 60 per cent to 80 per cent.

**Mr. Axworthy:** Ten years from now when a U.S. Government in the future tramples on the rights of a small country like Nicaragua or Grenada and an MP gets up and asks our Government of the day to take some stand on the fundamental rights of a small country, do you think after this trade agreement we will have the ability or will to do that?

**Some Hon. Members:** Yes.

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Axworthy:** They say "yes". They will not even do it now. How many times have we asked them to stand up against the economic embargo of Nicaragua and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) has refused time after time after time?

**Mr. Boyer:** You heard the Minister's position on ice cream today!

**Mr. Axworthy:** We have the Minister's statement on ice cream. It had all the quality of his campaign style, which was to go to university and tramp on a kid. I say to the Hon. Member that there is a difference between words and action.