

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Later on in the questionnaire we took the opportunity to ask the view of constituents on the trade agreement which had been negotiated with the United States. The combined figures of those who supported it and those who strongly supported it was 66 per cent. Fully two-thirds of those polled in this scientific survey supported the free trade agreement which has been entered into.

I have been listening with great interest to the progress of this debate. I took care this afternoon to pay attention to the comments offered by the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), the Leader of the New Democratic Party. I listened with some fascination because he is an academic and has a good knowledge of Canadian history, although our analyses may differ. He traced the evolution of the American psyche and the evolution of the Canadian *Zeitgeist*. He came to the conclusion that we are different nations when we examine ourselves, when we consider our role in the world, and when we consider our priorities for our nations. I agree with that fully.

Later in his remarks, through *omittendo* and some innuendo, the Hon. Member for Oshawa strove to imply that because we are entering into a trade liberalization agreement with the United States we will become the United States or become like the United States. That is where logic fails the distinguished Leader of that Party.

He, in that respect, is not unlike a fellow Edmontonian, Mr. Mel Hurtig, who also uses the slippery slope argument. As I understand it, the argument goes something like this: Once you have entered into a trade liberalization agreement, the next slide takes you to a customs union. Further the skids are greased so that you descend into some kind of a political union. Ultimately you are politically absorbed.

Mr. Hurtig and others dine out on this argument quite well, but never have they traced the causal connection, either through logic or through historical example. I put it to the House that it is rather irresponsible, at this very important stage in Canadian history, to torment Canadians with fear, fantasy, and fabrication when facts are what they crave. Tonight, in the time available to me, I intend to present some of those facts.

Before I do so, Madam Speaker, I want to comment on some of the other speeches we have heard here tonight. The Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville (Mr. Nystrom), for example, suggested—and again in the fashion of his Party he did not come out and say it—or implied that because of ownership facilitation that is contained in this agreement somehow our broadcasting and banking industries were to become prey to the American eagle. He knows well, because he is a well-informed Member, that that is truly not the case, that there are clear safeguards and protection under Canadian law to prevent that from happening, and that the free trade agreement takes those aspects of Canadian law well into account.

The Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville lamented that this free trade agreement might prevent the nationalization of the Canadian oil industry. If there is one reason why we should embrace and adopt this agreement, that is the reason. The biggest plus of this agreement is that it would not only preclude the nationalization of the Canadian oil industry but would prevent a Government of Canada from ever again bringing in a national energy program. That means something to an Albertan who has seen \$60 billion skimmed off the top of the market price and transferred to central Canada. Sixty billion dollars is what the National Energy Program rape and pillage amounted to.

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The Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo), who is normally a very straightforward, honest, and forthright Member of Parliament, said that fruits and vegetables were specially recognized under the agreement in that they were given 20 years to disappear as a Canadian industry. That is not the case. They are given 20 years in which to flourish as a Canadian industry. There is special recognition given for the necessity of an extended period of time because of the seasonal disadvantage in growing certain fruits and vegetables.

The Hon. Member for Humber—Port-au-Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) said that we had no sense of nationhood. Where was he when the Meech Lake vote was taken? He says that we have no sense of sovereignty. He omitted to recognize that the very embodiment, the repository of our sovereignty, which is our cultural sense and our cultural pride in terms of how we regard ourselves as being Canadian, is totally excluded from this agreement. I say again that that distinguished Member is falling prey to the temptation of dealing in fear and fabrication.

Last week, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie), in responding to a question I posed to him about certain discussions that had been entered into with the leaders of the Congressional Democratic Party in the United States and a group of Canadian parliamentarians, suggested that it was out of fear that Canadians had entered into this agreement. He suggested that we are driven to the agreement out of fear.

I believe that what attracted Canadians to this agreement and what will attract them in greater numbers as the days go by is the reality of the growth of the protectionist sentiment in the United States. That reality has resulted in 38 protectionist Bills targeted at Canada being put on the desk of the Chairman of the House Trade Committee, Congressman Sam Gibbons of Florida. To the credit of that hon. gentleman, he is delaying those Bills because he has believed in free trade all his life and would like to see the arrangement go forward.

In referring to the facts of this agreement, I am drawn to some comments that were offered by the former Premier of Alberta, the Honourable Peter Lougheed, when he testified before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and