

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Clearly Canada has shown leadership. We are out front, not behind.

Dr. Noel Brown, North American Regional Director of the UN Environment Program, said:

If there were ever to be a Nobel Prize for leadership in exploring the complexities and intricacies of sustainable development, then my submission is that Canada would have to be a candidate... the leadership that you are asserting in this field is extremely important and the world is watching.

I am pleased to see the Opposition is watching. We want them to watch. We do not want them to set fear among Canadians. Canadians had a dose of that and clearly they chose the alternative. I think it is important for the Opposition to remember that.

A couple of myths that were perpetuated in the election dealt with the environment. The FTA will in no way force us to lower standards or change our focus on preserving our environment. We have heard the fear-mongers and we are hearing them again, claiming the agreement will force us to accept American standards on products like pesticides. I am glad to say that Canada has high standards of safety and control on pesticides higher than the U.S. Will we lose the right to maintain our higher standards? Of course not. One simply has to look at the agreement.

Article 603 states that both countries maintain the right to set product standards whose purpose is to protect health, safety, essential security, the environment or consumer interests. Clearly the example has been set and high standards will prevail. Not only will we not allow Alachlor to be used in this country, any products with Alachlor will not be allowed to enter Canada. Everyone remembers when Alachlor was ruled unacceptable in Canada. Clearly this Government acted responsibly. Our officials determined it is harmful to Canadians and it is gone.

At the same time, in London—Middlesex, which is the hub of most activity in Canada, a recently built agriculture research centre, to be officially opened this spring, is currently doing work on biological control and natural methods to deal with pests. Their work will not be affected by the FTA in any way, shape or form. Their approach promotes common sense farming, where agricultural production costs are reduced while using sound environmental farming practices. Our standards will not be lowered. American producers of pesticides wishing to sell their products in this country will have to meet our stringent standards.

It is very important that that point be made clear. The Opposition has said almost all the time that we have to accept the lowest common denominator when not only is that objectionable to Canadians, it is objectionable to Americans and those who share the global environment with us. When one looks at what is going on in Europe in the common market as they struggle toward union in 1992, in every documented case of their working on harmonization of standards they have chosen the highest standard. It is the highest common denominator, not the lowest.

I know the fearmongers find that hard to accept. They would just as soon be able to capture that fear as they tried so hard and diligently to do for 51 days during the election. Clearly it did not work then and it will not work now. The people have decided.

• (2020)

One month after the election, one month after the mandate that Canadians have given to our vision of the future, particularly as it pertains to the environment or the doomsayers all said that Canada would not be a fit place to live—what are they saying now? As reported in *The Gazette* of Montreal: “Free trade could help the environment”. That was written by Lawrence Solomon, the author of *The Conserver Solution*, research co-ordinator of Energy Probe. Clearly now that the people have decided these agencies and organizations have started to see the wisdom in what the people have decided upon. I hope that it can carry across the House.

All those trips up and down the streets and the concession roads were well worth it. Those people in that riding and the others across Canada had an opportunity to reflect on what this Government has done. They have decided that they want to be part of that vision of the future. They see it as the alternative. When they see that Canada is showing leadership, it has been acknowledged that it is moving out with other countries of the world. It is not a shell any longer. It is a country whose place in history and time has come.

It is particularly fitting for the young people of our country that they do not now have to sit back and apologize for their elders' timidity. They can now say: “Gee, my Mom and Dad, my grandparents, cared about me. They included me in their vision in voting for a vision of Canada in which I will have and be able to take my rightful place. I will be able to compete. I will be able to challenge with the best in the world, in fact to make the world a better place”.