

Government Orders

extremely important because people have a chance during that debate to talk not just about what is in the bill but the very foundation on which that bill is built, the very ideology.

We know that the trade deal is there to entrench Tory policies. The Liberals agree so it entrenches theirs too and it is easier for them to have a Conservative government than to do it themselves. We understand that.

There really can be no reason for ramming through a bill which is so fundamental to the future of Canada. To talk about the politics of inclusiveness is a joke. As I said, we will have had about six hours of debate on this bill. We have had longer debates on bills that certainly were important, but not as fundamental to the future of this country and of our children and grandchildren than this bill. Yet the government says six hours. That is it; it is closing it down.

• (1835)

If these are the the politics of inclusiveness from a member of this government that has invoked closure and used time allocation to shut down debate more than any government in the history of Canada, it will not work and Canadians will not let the government get away with it.

This bill deserves a real debate. Canadians deserve the opportunity to see a full debate, to participate in a full debate, to have all the information and to know that their representatives have had the opportunity to express their views and had the opportunity to explore the alternatives, to explore on what the bill is based as well as the contents of the bill. It is not good enough to stop the voices and views of Canadians. There is no rush and we on this side of the House say, Prime Minister, step in, give democracy a chance.

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to raise a couple of questions with my hon. friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, who I must in beginning my remarks compliment for actually debating NAFTA, unlike so many of her colleagues who, it would seem, would prefer to engage in histrionics and take up the time of the House debating parliamentary procedure instead of getting on with this important topic that we are here to discuss today.

She asked the question: "Why is the government putting this legislation through?" I am sure she has given a lot of time to studying the bill and she, along with her colleagues, realize that this is enabling legislation. This is enabling legislation that puts things into place such that the government can bring it into effect when they are ready to do so. This deal is complete. Both the Presidents—

An hon. member: How can you say that without laughing?

An hon. member: Pose your question, has it come yet?

Mr. McCreath: Mr. Speaker, I find it amazing my hon. friends do not want to take this opportunity to be enlightened on the topic of NAFTA, which I am doing.

This legislation puts in place the procedures that mean when the agreement is ratified in all three countries, it can be declared. My hon. friends think that the Canadian public support their position on this. Maybe they will win the next election. If they win the next election, they do not have to use the declaration of this and bring it into effect, but it is there and it is ready. We will be ready, just as the Americans and the Mexicans will because they have agreed as we will that NAFTA itself will not be reopened.

My question that I would like to raise is this. My hon. friend says that her party supports trade and yet it wants to build barriers around this country and not provide us with the opportunity. Is she not aware of the fact that the world is changing? Is she not aware of the fact that trading blocs are developing around the world?

If we look at the outcome of the FTA—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Will the hon. member please put the question?

Mr. McCreath: My question very simply is this. Does my hon. friend not have the confidence in Canadians that this government does? Does my hon. friend and her party not think that Canadians can compete with Mexicans, Americans or anyone else?

Ms. McLaughlin: The answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, we have confidence in Canadians. I just wish this government did. Does it have more confidence in Americans than it has in Canadians? We are not at all talking about