

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

am proud that we have somebody from Edmonton East who can speak about it so effectively.

All of these people and many more I could have talked about have given their maiden speeches on this deal in the past week. All of them defeated Conservatives and, if I were a Conservative, I would want to listen and understand why and try to do something about the reasons which led to those defeats.

Instead, the Government has not listened. Its Minister said, before any amendment was even presented, that there can be no amendments to this Bill, before he even heard what was to be suggested by the Opposition. There was no chance to even present an amendment on behalf of this Party or the other opposition Party, because the Conservatives kept the debate at Clause 2 and imposed closure yet again on that stage of parliamentary proceedings.

We had amendments to help with all of these concerns, amendments to see to it that there was an attempt to set up a definition of Canada within the definitions clause, rather than just defining the United States.

• (1650)

A definition to deal with the override clause permits the federal Government to undercut any provincial law in the future which contradicts this trade agreement, something which will be constitutional poison in the future of this country. We had amendments to present which would have set out that there has to be something in the agreement, not just in the legislation, which prevents Canada from exporting water to the United States. We would have had an amendment to present which would have said for greater certainty, nothing in the agreement should be interpreted to adversely affect Canada's social, cultural, environmental, agricultural and regional development programs.

We would have had a very clear and explicit reference to Articles 2010 and 2011 to make it quite clear that they could not prevent social initiatives in the future as they do at the moment. We wanted to present an amendment to stop any future granting by this Government of further increases in import quotas to the United States for dairy, poultry, eggs and other marketing board products. Yet we did not have a chance to present these. We had an amendment to suggest that the Canadian Wheat Board had to be defended, that assurances had to be given by the Government, as has been requested by the prairie pools. Yet that too was not given a chance to be debated on the floor of this House, let alone the chance for representatives from the prairie

pools to testify, as should have been possible on a Bill as crucial as this one to their future and to the future of all Canadians in western Canada.

We had suggestions which we wanted to present as amendments to ensure that nothing would prevent any party, provincial, municipal or federal from taking action to protect the environment. We also wanted to see to it that the subsidies negotiation was given some constraints so that the Government could not simply run off and give away more of the country as it has given away so much in this present trade deal. That was not possible to present.

We had amendments to set up a special committee of the House to oversee what happens with these negotiations in the future on subsidies. We had amendments to suggest ways in which it would be possible to set in place legislation which would give workers who were hit in vulnerable sectors, vulnerable communities, vulnerable firms as a result of the trade deal, the chance to be able to obtain special help, something which was obtained in the context of the Auto Pact, something which we fought for as a Party to get in the context of the Auto Pact and something after we achieved permitted us to accept and support the Auto Pact.

We had other suggestions which dealt with energy which said to Canadians right across this country that energy in Canada has been paid for by tax breaks from every Canadian from east to west. Everyone has paid for the development of energy in this country. We do not have the right, for the sake of our children and our grandchildren, to give away what Canadians in the past have paid for through their taxes, the right to self-sufficiency in this country before we export to the United States.

Mr. McDermid: We are not giving away anything.

Mr. Langdon: All of these commitments we would have liked to put forward in amendments, Madam Speaker. I think it is time, as the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) said, to look ahead, to look at some of the questions that will be faced in the future. Very tough questions will have to be faced by Canadians over the next 10 years. These questions include the whole problem of adjustment.

What adjustment is going to be possible for workers? There has been no response. There has been no development of the program of older worker adjustment which was supposed to have been in place months ago and yet is not in place. What about the subsidies discussions?