

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

insurance will not be threatened by this deal. Despite what others have said in the last couple of months, it will not cost women between \$5,000 and \$15,000 to have a baby under the Free Trade Agreement. Despite what has been said in the past about whom to vote for and whom not to vote for, not voting for the Government will not cost you your old age pension. The unemployment insurance for Atlantic fishermen has been challenged before. It was rejected by the United States Department of Commerce. We have been through that.

Unfortunately, what many people in Newfoundland voted against—and I regret that my hon. friend from Humber is not here, he did his own analysis of the election results—was a Cronenberg horror fiction that had been created by the Liberal opposition during this election campaign.

● (1830)

They did not vote against free trade because, unfortunately, they were not given the full opportunity to vote against free trade because the whole issue was clouded by doom and gloom, horror fiction, and negative views of a situation that will not exist in this country.

The ultimate difference between the Government and the Opposition is a difference of attitude. The federal Government will not roll over and die when the Free Trade Agreement is in place. The provinces will not roll over and die when the Free Trade Agreement is in place. GATT does not cease to exist when the Free Trade Agreement is in place. If we continue to focus absolutely on the negatives we will not see the positives.

Our Government and our Party chose to maximize the benefits of this agreement and to ensure that the negative effects are minimalized. We are told that we cannot compete. We are told that under the Free Trade Agreement we will be swamped because of lower wage rates and economies of scale. My constituents do not believe that we cannot compete. All my constituents want is the opportunity to compete.

I suggest to the House that if we cannot compete with the barriers down we will never be able to compete with the barriers up. I know that Canadians, with the imagination, entrepreneurship and ability to be productive and compete, can take on any American company and any American product and do well, can increase their ability to do more and the opportunities that go with that.

We can do better. We will do better. We are faced with a world that is changing very quickly. We are faced

with a world that is not strictly focused on the United States, but a world that is becoming more technically adept, that is trading 24 hours a day, and that tells Canada to keep up or be left behind.

What I resent most about those who are against the Free Trade Agreement is that they speak of the *status quo*. As a Newfoundlander, and I am sure all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will agree, the *status quo* is not something that has served us particularly well. I fear in this world that *status quo* is in a sense a fallacy. If we do not move ahead we will fall behind.

Canadians have a certain standard of living and quality of life. We expect the level of services provided by our Government to be of such high quality that we must keep up, we must continue to move ahead. It is with the Free Trade Agreement, with progressive and imaginative economic policies of this Government which we have seen in the last four years that we will be able to keep up.

The *status quo* was something that has hurt many of us. The *status quo* is something that we cannot accept. The Free Trade Agreement is an opportunity for us to enter a market under conditions that are predictable and secure, to enter a market ten times our size, knowing that if we run into difficulty we have a mechanism we can participate in for the first time to solve our problems and deal with our conflicts, under a code that is predictable.

I certainly speak for my constituents. I suspect that at the end of the day I speak for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The Free Trade Agreement is something we must have. When we consider the nature of our resource based economy and the nature of the opportunities before us, if we are denied the opportunities under the Free Trade Agreement, we may never see them again. Canada will fall behind and I suggest the country will have missed an opportunity that we can never replace. I think we can all stand in shame if opportunity is not taken now. We should move ahead to ensure the benefit for all Canadians.

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I make my first speech to this honourable Chamber as the Member for Timmins—Chapleau. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Speaker on his re-election as Speaker of the House of Commons. I also want to thank the people from my riding who supported me. I express to them my total commitment to work on their behalf for this term and many terms to follow.