

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Parliament to give their support to the Grand Canal project. That project involved the export of Canadian water to the U.S. As the Hon. Member for Skeena pointed out, it was a ridiculous and environmentally disastrous megaproject that would have James Bay dammed and turned into a freshwater lake from which water would be pumped to the American Midwest using something in the neighbourhood of 11 nuclear reactors.

● (2130)

This is not something that exists only in the mind of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). We know he was also a backer of the project at one point until he learned the value of silence with respect to these things. It was backed by the Liberal Premier of Quebec, Mr. Bourassa. We have no reason to believe he ever repudiated his support of that project. He is an active supporter of the free trade agreement, again an embarrassment, I am sure, to many Liberals.

For those reasons, we need to see this water issue and the rhetorical extravaganza that we are sometimes treated to by certain Liberal Members with respect to the export of Canadian water as ambiguous on their part because we know there were a number of very high powered Liberals behind this project long before the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement was negotiated. That is something Canadians should know about because they might have the impression, if they were to take words at their face value, that the Liberal Party was united in its opposition to massive water exports and diversions to the U.S. when in fact they are not. Some of the biggest movers and shakers in the Liberal Party of Canada have actually been active backers of the scheme. Let that be on the record for those Canadians who may be listening tonight and who may have a genuine concern about exporting Canadian water to the U.S. Let them know that they cannot rely on the Liberal Party of Canada to oppose that kind of diversion of Canadian water to the U.S.

With respect to the origins, the momentum, shall we say, for free trade and its counterpart deregulation, we must look to the Liberal Party of Canada and a Liberal Government. It was begun in fact by a Liberal Government. Early conversations about negotiating some kind of free trade agreement with the U.S., albeit sometimes the talk had to do with sectoral arrangements, go back to the presence here in Canada of the former American ambassador, Mr. Robinson. This is where these kinds of talks had their origin.

It is no coincidence that we then had a royal commission on economic development in Canada chaired by the now High Commissioner to London, Donald Macdonald, a high profile Liberal who went on to recommend free trade as a leap of faith with the U.S. I would say a leap of blind faith. To be fair to Mr. Macdonald, he did not recommend all the things now in this agreement. In fact, one of the things he did not recommend at all was the section with respect to services. The Macdonald Commission did not even do a study on services, so when it comes to services it is not just a leap of faith, it is a leap of blind faith. No work has been done on this at all and

Canada is asked to be a guinea pig in a completely asymmetric relationship that will make us, when we look back, the laughing stock of the world with respect to what this Government has led us into on free trade in services.

There has been a lot of what I would call anxious reflection on the part of Canadians who are against this agreement. They are asking themselves how they should vote. Who should they trust with respect to actually getting rid of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement? I submit to them that, in spite of the sincerity of some members of the Liberal caucus with respect to the agreement, Canadians who are opposed to this agreement, who see it as a threat to the kind of Canada we have already built and to the kind of Canada we could build in the future, the only choice in this respect, the only Party that has been on record from day one as being against this kind of arrangement, has been the New Democratic Party. That is the message we will be taking out to the people of Canada in the election when the Prime Minister gets up his nerve and calls it.

If there is one thing that all Canadians are unanimous about, I think even some who are for this agreement, it is that this kind of thing can only be done by a government which has sought a mandate to make such a significant historical change in the destiny of Canada. So we hope at some point the Prime Minister, the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade (Mr. McDermid), will have an attack of democratic ethics and call an election. They will say, "This is not the kind of thing we can do in the fourth year of our mandate, especially given the fact that when we sought that mandate we never even mentioned the fact we were about to negotiate such an agreement. In fact, we gave the impression we would not negotiate such a thing at all."

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, this has been a rather interesting and amusing evening sitting listening to the political rhetoric and the clown-like method with which it was presented by some Hon. Members opposite. There were many points raised tonight too numerous to talk about in the ten minutes allotted me in this particular period, but I would like to touch on a few of the subjects raised.

First, my friend, the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis), stood up and talked about how terrible foreign investment is. He went on at some length about what a terrible thing foreign investment in Canada is. Yet at the same time, the Leader of his Party, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent), is sitting on the platform of General Motors when they invest billions of dollars in his riding. He welcomes that kind of investment.

Bob White, the national Vice-President of the NDP and President of the Canadian Auto Workers, where was he recently? In Japan, welcoming and encouraging Japanese investment in Canada. Bob White, President of the Canadian Auto Workers, but more importantly Vice-President of the NDP, was in Japan encouraging Japanese investment in