

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Third, we would enhance the skills of our labour force with a long term commitment to eliminating illiteracy, improving skill training and apprenticeship training, and encouraging retraining opportunities throughout the working lives of our working men and women.

● (1840)

Fourth, we would encourage domestic investment by a determined policy to keep interest rates down rather than allow the Bank of Canada to do what it has been doing recently. Fifth, we would use our resource wealth as a base to develop a more diversified manufacturing economy here in Canada. Not long ago I was in the Province of Quebec meeting with the head of a corporation, to be specific in the Rouyn—Noranda area, a very successful corporation which is now reinvesting millions of dollars. As I went through the plant with the head of this corporation and saw this very successful enterprise, I asked at each part of the visit where the particular equipment was manufactured. He pointed out that the equipment was manufactured in Italy, Sweden, the United States, and a couple of other countries. Rarely did I find equipment manufactured in Canada.

We had a discussion and we had a fundamental agreement. We both agreed that Sweden with a smaller population, a forest products country, had made the effort to have an industrial strategy in order to start exporting mining and forest equipment based on its resources. He said to me: "We have never had such an industrial strategy in Canada". I told him that I agreed and that it was time we had one. We should be manufacturing that equipment here in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I say to the Prime Minister that I would have thought economic nationalism 1(b) is to capture your domestic market and use that as a base for exports abroad. I just wish we had a government around this country that would try it sometime. I see the Prime Minister smiling. I can tell him one thing: he would never find the Japanese anywhere in their country failing to use a domestic opportunity, a forest product potential, or a mining potential, and importing all their equipment. The Japanese did not start out with half our resources and they are exporting their manufactured goods all around the world. If we took even the conservative approach of the Japanese, we would have used our mining and forest potential not simply as hewers of wood and drawers of water. We would be manufacturing and exporting our goods all over the world.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, we obviously want to go on trading with the United States. Americans are and will remain our most important trading partner. We presently benefit from this trade and we will go on doing so. But this should not be at the expense of our independence as a country.

To settle our trading disputes, we should establish a tribunal which has influence and power. We should examine these disputes case by case keeping in mind that they are normal between neighbouring countries and that Americans will sometimes win out. We should apply the Auto Pact concept to other sectors of our economy, like chemicals or electronics.

As far as multilateral trade is concerned, we should cooperate with other countries to give new impetus to international trade, to reinforce the system of financial institutions, and to establish an international code of ethics for multinationals. We should open up our horizons, find new trading partners, negotiate through GATT.

The 40 per cent reduction in tariffs, Mr. Speaker, which took 40 years to become a reality, was negotiated through concessions made by both sides through GATT. This must go on. Although far from perfect, GATT gives Canada the trading flexibility it needs and neutralizes power struggles much more efficiently than the trade agreement negotiated by this Government.

[*English*]

New Democrats believe that developing the full potential of our country requires using the energy and enterprise of the private sector and the ingenuity and vision of the public sector to achieve Canadian goals. Unlike the Prime Minister who said earlier that only the private sector creates wealth, we in the New Democratic Party believe the private sector and the public sector in the past, in the present, and in the future will both have leading roles to play in the creation of jobs.

Strengthening Canada's economy means building from the inside out, with a comprehensive approach to encourage diversification, innovation, and self-direction at the community level; industrial and technological excellence at the national level; and global co-operation at the international level. A healthy and productive trading relationship with the United States remains important in our strategy, as I said earlier, and should be in the strategy of any political Party in this country. The Americans are and will remain our most important trading partner. That is a cliché, but it is true. However, as confident Canadians, we also believe in reaching beyond this continent.

We believe that our trade and other economic policies promise greater prosperity for average Canadians and their families. We also believe that they will aid and complement, not jeopardize, our capacity to control our own future as a people. In my judgment, whenever the Prime Minister decides to call an election, and I hope it is soon, the choices are really clear. Canadians will be choosing between different visions of Canada, and our vision puts fairness for average Canadians and future generations as the top priority on the front burner, not on the back burner.