

*Plant Closures*

Congressman rather than a Member of Parliament, or get someone in their commission rather than here.

I do not state that this will happen overnight, but it may do so over time. People are pretty smart and they will figure those things out. They will soon realize that they have to go where power is. If you are going to exercise the power, you have to go where it is. It cannot be said that this will not happen for there are historical precedents. Hawaii first started out with a trade agreement with the United States and ended up as the fiftieth state. In the 19th century the German states started out as independent kingdoms or duchies. Over time as the *Zollverein* they had a customs agreement and they ended up being dominated by Prussia, and then there was Germany. History has many examples of where those things happening, and people finally decided that they were tired of being denied the rights to make decisions, so they went to where the power is.

Canadians have ambition and the appetite to be a significant and important, but independent, player and to do important things in the world, to open up not only world markets, but to do something constructive in trying to reorganize a crazy, nuclear dominated world. Canadians believe that we can do that. I do not mean to say that we will change things overnight, but we can make a real difference. Canadians want the independence to do that, and they can see that independence being shrunken or limited by this type of agreement.

Canadians want to retain the same opportunity within their own country to make decisions whether it is on ensuring equalization of opportunities, or that we do not have to have everybody move to the southern states to get a job, or move to Toronto, but we have always had the principle that we have tried to move jobs to where the people are. We also want to have the right to make those decisions for ourselves through our own institutions in our own way. That is the type of vision that many Canadians believe in. It is not the market-place vision. It is not the merchant class vision. It is not that type of bottom line vision. However, it is there, it is strong, it wants a focal point, it wants a vehicle, and it wants a government that will give life, substance, and meaning to that vision. Canadians do not find it in this Government. If this agreement comes into force and is entrenched in stone it will close off the doorways for that vision ever being implemented.

That is why we are involved in this fight. That is why we, on behalf of millions of Canadians from coast to coast, are fighting the type of battle we have fought and will continue to fight. We believe surely that, if any appeal makes any sense that we can make to the Prime Minister of this country, that is that he has a responsibility to give people that choice. If you believe in what you are doing, which you obviously do, then simply put it out on the platform at election time. Quit playing games. Quit going on television and saying, "Maybe this week, maybe tomorrow. I'll consult the stars. I'll consult my anniversary date. I'll check with the kids at home". That is not leadership.

The Prime Minister has a clear responsibility, and it is one of the conventions of Parliament within the real conventions of democracy that he has a right to put in front of the people a major change in the life of this country, and the people have the right to make that decision. Quit playing the games. Quit doing the cutesy little interviews. Quit tantalizing the Canadian public. Simply say: "That is an obligation I have as a Prime Minister, for no other reason, and I am prepared to live up to it".

We will be there, and we will do what we have to do. We believe there is a newer world out there. We believe that we can represent that vision. We believe that when the people get the right to make that choice and the Prime Minister gets off the television screens and gets over to Government House, people will give us that opportunity and that mandate to fulfil and live up to a brand new vision for Canada, one that goes way beyond this trade agreement, one that does not see us tied into a continental fortress, but talks about the world as a place where Canadians can do the most good, and where we can also do good for everybody else in the world.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--MOTIONS

• (1700)

[*English*]

### LABOUR

#### PLANT CLOSURES

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing legislation to prevent plant closures, which would require any corporation that had received federal funding to make public the books of any plant it proposed to shut down and would require any shutdown to be justified by demonstrating long-term losses.

He said: Madam Speaker, I had expected to be making a different speech this afternoon, but we will have to wait for that. What this motion seeks to do is two things: first, to address the very serious problem of plant closures which exist in considerable quantity right across the country. We do not document them through Statistics Canada at this stage any longer, but they are nevertheless a continuing and prevalent problem.

Second, it attempts to protect the taxpayers' investment in a sense, in these plants, because this particular motion does not deal with plant closures in general; it deals with plant closures which come about in the cases of corporations which have received federal funding. So it is not, as somebody suggested