

have been asking me to run again. There are many younger ones who could run.

In fact even two or three elections ago there were a great many interested in the job and some of them would be asking after my health and would even come up and take my pulse just to check on it. But I have been able to carry on, putting in a good day's work as my hon. colleague mentioned.

However, there does come a time and this is of course going out over the air. I have told my riding association and gave them some months' notice to look around. I told them to find somebody but I want the riding to remain in the Progressive Conservative fold. That is the important part but I am quite sure a very satisfactory replacement will be found with a spirited nominating convention.

Of course I will look back with a great deal of regret at leaving. This has been a wonderful place. All members make friends. I guess people in the ridings wonder and they will say: "What are you doing fraternizing with the Liberals or the NDP? You are there to defeat them and do this and do that". I tell them it comes as a shock but there are a lot of very nice people on the opposition side. I guess I am one who has a great rapport with members of the other side. I enjoy talking to them, I enjoy being with them. I do not enjoy some of the things they say when they are standing at their seat but that is to be expected. I guess I am not too controversial a member of Parliament. I came here to look after the wants and needs of my constituents which are many.

• (2035)

Being members of the government over the last few years puts us on the hot seat all of the time. We are blamed for everything. We are told that Canada is the most terrible country in the world and the recession was dreamed up by the Prime Minister himself. Yet we as members of Parliament when we travel beyond our borders are looked at with awe and with the greatest respect. We are told we are from Canada, the most magnificent country in the world. I have said to more than one person: "I wish to hell you would come back to Canada and tell the Canadians that because they do not seem to believe it".

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I had the great privilege about a year ago to visit Rio de Janeiro at the UNCED conference, the great environmental conference attended I think by 180 countries and the heads of state from 20 of the greatest countries. Those people, when they saw the maple leaf, brightened up and wanted to talk to us and tell us just what they had heard about Canada.

I am certainly very unhappy that 1.5 million are unemployed. A good many in my riding, which is a rural riding, are unemployed. It is not a great industrial area, but it certainly is a beautiful place. People love to live in Parry Sound—Muskoka. There are probably higher paying jobs in other areas but they want to live where they were brought up. The economy there certainly is improving.

I happen to be in a tourist area and the tourist industry has been hard hit due to the recession. Of course last year was a disaster because along with the recession we also had terrible weather. Every weekend it was raining and cold so it was really a disaster.

I heard my colleagues this evening commenting on the economy, berating the government for the free trade agreement and the recently approved NAFTA. I wonder what they are thinking about. It is all very well to say that there are a great many jobs lost. The figure quoted here a couple times by the hon. member for Kamloops is that 400,000 manufacturing jobs were lost over a period of time. There was no mention of the many thousands of new jobs that have been created. There was no mention of the fact that there are more people working now. After all, there were all these students and young people coming into the work force over the last two or three years and nobody seems to consider that.

We are a country of 27 million people. Are we going to manufacture just for our own citizens and forget about trading? We are a trading nation and if we are going to trade then we certainly have to open our own borders and purchase goods from our neighbours.

If the free trade agreement is so terrible and has caused so many jobs to be lost how is it that Canada and the United States are the two greatest trading partners in the world?