

Time Allocation

I will be sitting here in a moment, waiting to hear the speech of the Minister for International Trade, while he explains to the people of Canada the fact that seven out of ten Canadians want an election fought on this deal before it passes in the House of Commons. I am going to be listening with interest to what he is going to say when he says: "We do not believe in that process, we do not have to go to the people of Canada before we jam this through the House of Commons".

I look across now at the Minister for International Trade and at his colleagues. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) said to the people of Canada that he was against the trade deal. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) told the people of Canada, in 1983, that he was against the trade deal. Then the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said that he was against a trade deal with the United States. That is what he said. The people of Canada made the mistake of believing the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister did not say what he was really feeling.

I want to say to the Minister for International Trade that I do respect him for being honest with the people of Canada. I remember during the last campaign where he said to the people of Canada: "We can't tell them what we are going to do, because if we told them what we are going to do, they would never elect us". He was dead on. Now they know what they were going to do; they were going to sell out this country, they were going to give away Canada. The people now have figured out that that is the hidden agenda of this Government. The minute that they have a chance to walk into those polling booths, they are going to make an "x" and this Government is going to be history.

I want to simply say that the Minister for International Trade has finally realized that we do not want to be part of any process that jams this trade deal down the throats of Canadians. He may want to use that approach, and he is using that approach, but we are not going to be part of that process in any way, shape or form.

If he wants to introduce closure, muzzle the Members of Parliament and jam this legislation through the House of Commons and then some time in the distant future call an election to see what the people of Canada think about it, I am afraid that the people of Canada are going to send a very clear message. Then the Minister for International Trade will finally have his way. He will then, as a defeated Member of Parliament, ask to go to the United States to become an American citizen, because that is what he wants to do. That is what he wants all of us to do. He wants Canada to become a fifty-first state, a territory of the United States. That is what he wanted when Newfoundland was coming into Confederation. He went out with his family and he said: "We do not want to join Canada; we want to join the United States". A few years later, he is finally having his boyhood dream of being an American citizen. He can even still live in Canada.

When the people of Canada have an opportunity to register their view on this—and they will—unfortunately this Government will have ignored their requests to have a chance to indicate their position on this trade deal before it passes the House of Commons. They do not have a mandate to jam this legislation through the House of Commons. The Prime Minister said that he was against the trade deal. It was never even mentioned during the last general election, not once. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade did not mention it once during his campaign. The Minister for International Trade did not mention it once during the campaign. The Prime Minister of Canada did not mention it once, and they are jamming through the House of Commons the most important piece of legislation that this country has ever seen. Those are the words of the Prime Minister.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, this is not a difficult or a complicated matter. This present Government of Canada has a two-track trade policy. One, of course, is to negotiate in the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade to try to improve our trading access to the 96 partners of GATT, particularly with emphasis on the Pacific Rim. We are pursuing that. The conference of the Uruguay Round will be held in Montreal in December. We all hope that there will be some progress. It is very difficult. There are 96 countries involved.

The second arm of our trade policy is to secure better and more assured access to the U.S. market. They take 80 per cent of all of our exports. A third of all the wealth of Canadians every year comes from our exports. A quarter of the wealth of Canadians every year comes from our trade and our exports to the United States of America.

We have secured an agreement after two years of negotiation. It started in June 1986. The elements were agreed to in October 1987. They were made public then. The full text of the agreement was made public in December. We have had that for eight or nine months, whatever the period is. The agreement was signed on January 3, 1988. We had Senate reports in 1982 and 1987 that we should enter into a free trade agreement with the United States. It has been studied in the Senate and in the House of Commons on many occasions. I will not go into all of the details. They are already on the record.

This present Bill has been studied and debated longer than the debate in the United Kingdom Parliament, when in the United Kingdom they decided to join the European Community. The debate there was a shorter debate than we have already had in this House. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner) said: "Let the people decide". The problem is, Hon. Members in the two opposition Parties were never satisfied with the decision that the people made in 1984. The Liberals do not think that the people of Canada should be allowed to have any other government than a Liberal government. They would not accept the verdict of 1984.