

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Today, we must learn to share with others. Technical progress in the area of communications, the specialization of production and even transformation technologies, as well as the lack of some resources are factors which, among others, have contributed to opening up the world, especially in the area of trade.

As I was saying, we are no longer the citizens of a ward, a city, or even a country. In several respects, we belong to the international community.

I think we all know the *Rolling Stones* who do not belong to this country. We all enjoy eating New Zealand lamb and we are pleased to taste clementines from Morocco. We enjoy the fragrance of French perfumes. We wear clothing made in Hon Kong and we are happy to drive European or Japanese cars.

In my own riding, we have an international vocation. Pulp and paper from Brompton and Windsor, as well as asbestos from the city of Asbestos are exported everywhere in the world, the Bombardier firm with its snow and transportation equipment, are all proof that we are no longer living in a small village, but that we have become international in our dealings exchanges with other countries.

Mr. Chairman, such is the reality which we must accept. I regret that the people sitting in the Opposition cannot recognize this reality. We must maximize our opportunities by opening up trade with the rest of the world. As a matter of fact, as recently as December 15, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) stated before the Conference of the Americas, and I quote:

To use a truism, national economies are becoming more interdependent, and what occurs outside our country is now as important as what occurs inside.

Again, this goes to show you that what concerns the rest of the world concerns us too.

How many countries are now geared to the international market? Let's take for example the European Economic Community, or the free trade deals between Australia and New Zealand. I should also mention Israel and the United States, and countries like Canada and the United States which are slowly but surely moving towards such international agreements.

The obvious thing about free trade is that it seems to satisfy the needs of each and every country, each and every partner, while making good use of the economic, geographical or political characteristics which make them unique. It is like two merchants in a village who, instead of competing against each other, decide to merge

through a partnership agreement. In such a way will Canada, instead of being the so-called little brother to the American big brother, become an equal partner with the United States, with the same rights and claims.

History shows us therefore that Canada and the United States have developed through this century a most powerful trading relationship.

The idea of striking a free trade agreement with the United States did not come by chance to our political leaders nor is it a drastic change in Canada's history. This agreement, Mr. Chairman, is merely the logical extension of an existing relationship in accordance with the trend towards trade liberalization which prevails in the international economic community.

While I am on the subject of history, Mr. Chairman, allow me to recall certain events. In 1911, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Prime Minister of Canada, sought to liberalize trade with the United States. In 1935, to refresh the memory of the Liberal Opposition, Mackenzie King signed an agreement with the Americans in order to reduce tariff barriers between Canada and the United States. In 1983, to again refresh the memory of the Liberal Opposition, the Liberal Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, also sought to establish sectorial trade deals while establishing at the same time the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development prospects for Canada, better known as the Macdonald Commission.

I am only recalling a few facts of our history. They all have in common the same will to modify and even depolitize the framework of the economic relationship between Canada and the United States.

That relationship exists mainly because of the geography of our two countries. Is it not a fact that Boston is nearer to Montreal than Vancouver or even Calgary for instance, without of course making it a matter of distances to our fellow citizens in western Canada.

Clearly, nature had its way. The value of our exports to the United States has been on a constant increase, Mr. Chairman. Today, nearly 80 per cent of our exports go to our neighbors down South. Some believe, or used to believe at least that since we already exported close to 80 per cent of our products, there was no need to sign an agreement for freer trade because of the access we already had to the American market.

However, Mr. Chairman, that access is very uncertain. Let us simply recall lumber which many Members already referred to in their speeches, and which was a