

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

I believe that is very important in negotiating any treaty or any agreement with any international partner to send them a clear message that we are prepared to act and that we have the means with which to act. That is to what Motions Nos. 39 and 93 are speaking. I believe they are fundamentally important. I also believe that the principle at stake is that we should be protecting our territory and our country just as well as the Americans have protected theirs. That is a principle about which all Canadians, I believe, will be completely unanimous. In fact, it is an expectation and demand that Canadian citizens place on their Government when negotiating treaties, that Canada gets a fair shake and that we are not put in the position of being subservient to any other country.

• (1610)

**Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, we just heard a rather impassioned and eloquent statement about the need for protection. We have been told that these two amendments deal with protection and equity. I have a different explanation.

I think the two amendments are on the table today for what that Party believes to be good political reason. The definition of good political reason seems to me to be simply the utilization of propaganda techniques. Propaganda somehow or other to the Liberal Party and the NDP as it concerns the free trade arrangement seems to be their definition of good.

What is the essence of propaganda? It is to create fear, to create a smear. Disinformation lies at its heart. The reason the two amendments are on the table is to create a climate and an opportunity in the House to create disinformation. To stand up to say that these amendments provide protection which does not already exist is disinformation. It is simply not true. The first amendment is totally unnecessary. In a few minutes I think I can explain why. The second amendment runs against the agreement itself. It has nothing to do with protection.

The second amendment, Motion No. 93, simply violates the agreement. Then we hear: "We do not stand up for the national interest. Therefore we should do exactly what the Americans have done. We do not have the courage to stand in this Chamber. We as a Government do not represent Canadian interests. Therefore, we should do what the Americans do".

This is a different country. This is Canada. This is not the United States of America. We have a different system of governing. We have a different Constitution. We have a different set-up for our courts. We do not elect our judges. We appoint our judges, either for life or until the age of 75. We do that because we separate our judiciary in a different way. This is Canada. The legislation should be Canadian legislation to implement an international agreement, an agreement that we have reached with another country. We should inspect the agreement. If we do not like it, then we should vote against it, but we should not unilaterally violate it.

I lived in the City of Calgary when a federal Government unilaterally changed the policies that affected my city and my province, throwing people out of work. It created suicides and turmoil because a federal Government broke agreements that existed over a long period of time, without negotiation.

What the second amendment invites us to do is to break an agreement, part of a whole, part of a package that was arrived at. How was it arrived at? It was with the use of sectoral advisory groups. The most knowledgeable people in the country advised the Government every step of the way. If the area dealt with manufacturing, we had manufacturing advice. The same was true with respect to agriculture. They advised what would be good for Canada, what would be acceptable, and what would not be good for Canada.

To propose in the House that we violate the agreement is insanity. We worked hard at arranging an agreement that would be good for Canada. It will also be good for the United States of America, otherwise it would not have entered into it. Both countries see it as good, but it is a step into some unknown territory in some ways. We had the wisdom to insist on mechanisms that allow the agreement to evolve and develop, to be changed. We have processes in place such as the Canada-U.S. Trade Tribunal. On a daily basis it looks at how the agreement is evolving. Is it good for Canada? Is it good for the United States of America? Is there some little glitch in it that should be changed?

What we have done is put a process in place—and the Opposition never speaks about this. We have a six-month cancellation clause. If it is bad for Canada, we can get out of it unilaterally on six months notice. Members of the Opposition do not talk about that.

What they do is bring forward an amendment and do not tell Canadians that Chapter 18 in the agreement puts in place a Canada-U.S. Trade Commission to supervise on a daily basis the implementation of the agreement. If there are problems, they will surface and be worked out. That is the over-all sense of what is going on here.

Let us come to the next piece of legislation which already exists in Canada. We have a Special Imports Measures Act. We are not dealing with that today because it already exists. Section 48 of that Act gives inquiry powers to the Canadian Import Tribunal.

The NDP Member who spoke a few moments ago spoke about subsidies in the United States to automobile plants and whatever. This Government is so far ahead of the Opposition. If that is happening today, it can be complained about today. The tribunal can inquire into it today. The same will be true tomorrow. The same will be true the minute the new legislation is put in place. That does not change as a consequence of the legislation before us today. This Government has in place an inquiry mechanism, the Canadian Import Tribunal, to look into complaints about subsidies and unfair practices. It does not need an amendment. It is there.