

I have also listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie), the Hon. Member for St. John's West. He has a stand pat response to every question he is asked in the House. He comes back with the same phrase by rote: The people of Canada have decided and the Government has a right to proceed with this free trade deal. I am sure if you asked him where the washroom was he would give you the same answer. Perhaps he is right. The people of Canada have decided.

We have a Government in this House today debating free trade legislation. However, the people of Atlantic Canada have also spoken and even the entertaining effusiveness and huffery-puffery of the Minister from St. John's West cannot deny the fact that Atlantic Canadians have said no to this free trade deal. All you have to do is count the numbers. Twenty out of 32 seats said yes to the Liberal Party in Atlantic Canada.

As one of those Members, I made a commitment to the people of my riding that I would fight as hard as I could to ensure that the interests of Atlantic Canada are not trampled on by the Government's indecent haste to implement a deal that fully 57 per cent of the Canadian electorate said no to.

I say to the Hon. Member for St. John's West, who is not in the House, in fact I do not think there are any Ministers of the Crown to hear this particular debate today at this point, the people of Atlantic Canada saw through his cloud of smoke and they have not forgotten the comment he made in 1986 when he said that Atlantic Canada was well off compared to Bangladesh. Only that Minister could have uttered such an insensitive statement to the people of Atlantic Canada. That shows why Atlantic Canadians cannot, will not and did not rely on him to represent their concerns in Ottawa. They elected 20 Liberals out of 32 ridings to do that for them.

What has happened since the election? Have there been any attempts by the Conservative Government to allay the concerns expressed by 57 per cent of the Canadian electorate, people from northern Ontario and people from Atlantic Canada who have said no to the Government? No, and for a Government which has refused to listen, this is truly indicative of its style over the last four years.

I say its attitude is of no comfort whatsoever to Canadians. We have seen plants and factories close. We have seen people thrown out of work. All the while the Government refused to announce any assistance for

those workers, none whatsoever. We hear every day in Question Period about some of the problems with industries closing down. My colleagues from Thunder Bay—Nipigon and Nipissing got up in this House and raised concerns about job losses in the forest industry, and the Government has shown it has no compassion at all.

For Atlantic Canada, however, the Government's negligence is particularly worrisome. Just last week or the week before we heard Mickey Cohen, former Deputy Minister of Finance and now a senior business executive, say this about the future of regional development in Canada: "This is not pleasant stuff. You've got to say: Atlantic Canada, you're on your own; northern Ontario, you're on your own". I submit it is the right and duty of this House to ensure that does not happen.

If the Government had the legitimate concerns of the north and east and parts of the west of this entire nation at heart, it would have allowed our amendments on regional development programs and we would have had a Bill, while still flawed, which would have at least given some basic protection for the people that do not live in the centre of this great nation.

It is no wonder that we on this side of the House wanted that type of protection for regional development programs built into the Bill. Atlantic Canada has much at stake. We cannot afford the risks of this so-called leap of faith. The Prime Minister talked about winners and losers under free trade. I believe the people who need the assistance the most in the regions most at risk will be the first to suffer and will suffer the most.

The Government has let the people of Dartmouth down. It has let the people of Nova Scotia down. It has let the people of Atlantic Canada down. It has traded the unique fabric of Canada for a few bolts of cheap U.S. cotton and a sing-along with Ronald Reagan.

I recall when the Tory Government began the trade discussions. The principal objective was to obtain guaranteed access to the American market. In Atlantic Canada we know the importance of the U.S. and our producers were concerned about harassment of our products on the U.S. market. As the Prime Minister stated in an interview with the *New York Times*, "U.S. trade remedy laws can't apply to Canada, period". We know he will say one thing one week and another thing the next week, depending on what the polls tell him.

Does this trade deal protect Canadian exporters from American trade remedy laws, namely their countervailing duties and anti-dumping actions? The answer is no.