

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Crosbie: That is why you got 2,000 votes in my district and I got 25,000 votes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: I am too modest to mention this but I happened to get 60.5 per cent of the vote, and I have a mandate and I have a "womandate" as well.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: I want you to go down to Branch—92 per cent of the vote, 92 per cent! When I find that other miserable 8 per cent, God help them.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: As I was saying, the Free Trade Agreement was negotiated under the terms of the GATT and incorporates certain provisions of the GATT, including the GATT subsidies code. This means that Governments in Canada can continue to provide for economic growth and development. Why then did the opposition Parties go around this country, particularly in Atlantic Canada, with the vicious untruth that somehow this agreement was to interfere with regional development in this country? All that is in the Free Trade Agreement is a commitment for us to negotiate with the Americans to see if we can agree on a common definition of trade distorting subsidies, but 96 nations in the GATT have not as yet been able to agree on what these are. We want to see whether we can agree with the Americans. If they suggest a definition that we disagree with, we say no, n-o, no.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: There is not an American in the world that I am afraid of. There is not a member of the NDP or a member of the Liberal Party that I am afraid of. There is no one I am afraid of, Mr. Chairman. I can say no to anyone, except my wife.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: There is nothing in this Free Trade Agreement that endangers Canadian regional development policies of general application across this country.

We heard, of course, the myth and the exaggerations about social policies. We have already had a social policy that was challenged in the United States of

America. The two opposition Parties knew of it. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition knew all about it. This famous lawyer headed up McMillan Binch in a pinch. You could find him at McMillan Binch for a number of years. He had to know all about this, because if he did not know all about it himself he had to the high-powered help to tell him about it. They used to take him by the hand and lead him down to Winston's every day for lunch and lead him back after lunch.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: In 1985 one of our social programs was challenged, Mr. Chairman. You are certainly well qualified to be Mr. Speaker. In fact, I hope some day to be looking at you and seeing you in an upper place wherever that might be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: One of our social programs, unemployment insurance for fishermen, was challenged in 1985 by a group of American fish importers or somebody down there who did not like competition from Canada in the fishing industry. They challenged the unemployment insurance program for fishermen and claimed it was a subsidy.

Who threw it out? Who overturned the case? Who gave it the boot? Who took it by the slack of the drawers and put it right out through the door? The Americans took it by the slack of the drawers, not Canadians, not Ukrainians, not Uruguayans, not Peruvians. Americans took this stupid case by the slack of the pants and threw it out through the door because they said that it was a social program of general application, and therefore it could not be challenged.

The Deputy Chairman: I regret that I have to interrupt the Hon. Minister.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Mr. Crosbie: We have another nine hours tomorrow.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Chairman: It being twelve o'clock midnight, pursuant to Order made Friday, December 16, 1988, it is my duty to rise, report progress, and request leave to consider the Bill again at the next sitting of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Progress reported.