

Motions

It is a motion to set, as the Speaker himself put it, some moral weight on the committee which is considering this Bill and which has rejected the possibility of going across the country to hear Canadians from coast to coast; to hear Canadians in their small towns and in their small cities speak out in favour or against provisions in the trade Bill. The Minister of State (Mr. Lewis), the Deputy House Leader, when he made a speech on Bill C-130 said that the Government spoke for big Canada. It spoke for the big Canada which is, as I see it, the Canada made up of national elites, of powerful corporations and of dominant groups which have run this country for years and years throughout our history. Now this group of dominant individuals, of dominant corporations, of dominant cities, wants to take us and weave us into the United States. That is what Bill C-130 is all about.

Despite the tremendous significance of that move, the betrayal of hundreds of years of settlement, of development, of building and of history which has gone into making this country, this Government wants, nevertheless, on behalf of big Canada to proceed.

It is possible for this Government with its massive majority, despite the fact it has no mandate from the people from the past election, to force that kind of project through the House, though we shall see how far it goes beyond that.

What is completely unacceptable because it is undemocratic, unresponsive, insensitive and because it does not listen to the people of Canada is to take this action on behalf of big Canada. It does not permit small Canada, the small towns, the small cities, the groups which have fought for social justice against those large corporations and dominant elites, to have the chance, through hearings across the country, to put their point of view forward with respect of this betrayal of hundreds of years of history.

• (1550)

In taking that decision, the committee which is looking at Bill C-130 has in fact betrayed our democratic traditions, and I regret this very deeply. I do not say this simply as a reflection of my own thinking on this. I reflect instead the hundreds of telegrams and letters which have poured into my office and into the committee indicating that right across Canada, a broad cross-section of people want a chance to speak. They want a chance to be heard and they want that chance through cross-country hearings on the part of the committee.

There have been telegrams from groups like the National Federation of Nurses, the National Council of Playwrights, the Canadian Teachers Federation, the Saskatchewan Pro-Canada Network, the Little Mountain District Public Housing Tenants Association, the Toronto Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic, the Diocese of Victoria of Social Justice Commission in Victoria, B.C., Oxfam Canada, the Association of Canadian Publishers, the United Church of Canada, the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, the Executive

Secretary of the United Church in Winnipeg, the Jesuit Centre, the Health Coalition of Cape Breton—

[Translation]

The Quebec coalition opposed to free trade, groups that have said it is necessary for democracy and for the future of our country that there be hearings across the country so that the people of Canada can be heard.

[English]

There have been groups like the Catholic Family Services Bureau in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Conference Program staff of the United Church in Saskatchewan, the B.C. and Yukon Women's Centre Association, Co-op Atlantic, the Northwest Territories Federation of Labour—

[Translation]

... spokespersons for *la Solidarité populaire du Québec* ...

[English]

—the Archdiocese of Regina and its Social Action Committee, the Federation of Women Teachers Associations of Canada, the Toronto Theatre Alliance—

[Translation]

Groups like CIAFT from Montreal have said that throughout this country, where French and English are spoken, are groups that want to make presentations and that it is not possible unless the Committee decides to travel and visit cities in all provinces of this country.

[English]

There have been groups like Lawyers Against the Trade Agreement from Edmonton, Alberta, so I speak on behalf of these groups but not just on behalf of these groups. I speak on behalf of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of Canadians who do not accept this trade deal and believe by an overwhelming majority that it is essential that an election take place before this trade deal is put into effect.

This is a permissive motion but it is a permissive motion which I hope will take the moral weight of this democratic House of Commons to the committee which is looking at Bill C-130 by sending it a very simple message which says that the committee must listen to the people of Canada and it must cross this country so that the people of Canada can speak to it. It must see to it that there is fairness practised in the consideration of this Bill.

There is before this country a profound choice. It is a choice as to whether this country will continue independently as it has for the past 121 years, an event just recently celebrated here on Parliament Hill, or whether it will take steps which will weave it into a continental relationship dependent on the United States, a relationship which makes Canada no more than a colony of that country. That is the profound choice which is before us.