

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

America. Open up new trade lines. Replace the United States in terms of machinery and other kinds of parts and goods. Why are you signing this agreement? Why are you cutting yourselves out?"

The world is moving away from this great power bipolarization. This Government is not. It is the one that is stuck in the past. It is the one that has rearview mirrors attached to its policy. It is like a feeder fish that gets on the back of a big shark. This Government wants to become a feeder fish. It wants to latch itself on to the back of a big shark and go along with it.

Canadians do not want that. They want an independent role in the world. They realize that we can do it most effectively through international organizations, through strengthening, developing and enhancing them. That is why we are fighting so hard. We want to open up and retain that capacity for Canada to achieve that sense of a new vision and purpose.

Similarly, the people I talked to feel that we still have a real choice in the country for full employment. They feel that we still have a chance to put in place the right kind of mixtures of things to obtain full employment. We listen to members of the government treasury benches talk with enormous pride that after five or six years of a boom economy our unemployment is still at 8 per cent. That is not good enough. That is not acceptable. The boom started in 1983 when we were in government. It has continued throughout. We still have not been able to get unemployment down below 8 per cent. There is something wrong with that.

I refer the House to an interesting analysis done by a Dutch economist who studied those countries which were able to achieve virtually full employment versus all the other industrial countries that could not. He examined all the kinds of indicators. They were Gross National Product and levels of investment. Yet one of the key factors he considered was the ability to make independent choices about one's own economy. The successful ones were not members of the EEC or free trade groups. They were members of countries that retained the right to make judgments, to tailor and blueprint labour market policy, investment policy and research policy to fit the times and conditions.

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The argument they are making is that there can be good international relations as part of multilateral groups, but not to the point where the right to make those choices is given away. That is what we are giving away. When the right to control investment, resources, energy, culture, agriculture, and regional development, plus the questions of harmonization are given away, the opportunity for this country to initiate significant new employment opportunities for many Canadians has also been given away.

Finally, I put this case to you, Madam Speaker. The third part of that new vision, the contrasting vision, is based upon a simple question of what I call democracy. It is a simple

institution, but we have spent a lot of time in our society building it up, and slowly finding ways that people without wealth or status are able to have the right to make decisions about their lives, their families, and their neighbourhoods. We are simply the inheritors of an enormous number of battles and fights that have gone on in the past to ensure that that will happen. I believe that this Chamber is one of the prime repositories of that tradition. We have always recognized that there are sources of real power. Concentration of wealth is perhaps the most. Things can be bought, and things can be made to happen. There has to be a balance always. There has to be an alternative access always, a parallel ladder for people to have their interests heard, responded to, and acted upon.

We are in an age where much of that access is being closed off. We live in an age of executive federalism where more and more decisions are made by far-away institutions, by access behind closed doors of Cabinets or regulatory bodies. That is another topic that I will not get into.

Think what happens under this agreement, for example, when we lose our ability to make decisions about what the big corporations will do about tax policies. When decisions are made in a far off board room, outside our own country, where our own law cannot be applied to hold them accountable, what does that do in terms of the right to participate, the right to make a decision, or the rights of people in small, one mineral town communities in northern Québec, Alberta, or the Territories? If those opportunities are taken away to make those decisions because the power is removed, then an empty shell is left.

One of the real visions that people want is a return or a restoration of some feeling of control over their own lives. They want this institution to be far more effective than it has been in ensuring that we respond and are able to react to their types of concern. How is that to be done if a whole series of decisions have been taken on a whole range of aspects of our life and turned over to another commission, to private hands, to where it cannot be got at, or to where people are faceless? If that whole opportunity for ordinary Canadians to get a hold on the system and make themselves heard has been taken away, then one of the most precious and vital substances of their lives has been taken away. That is what this agreement does.

It is not only the economics. Talking about independence is not only talking about supply management boards, or investment programs. It is also talking about many intangibles, and things that people feel. After a while it will become fairly apparent that if we cannot get a decision from our own National Energy Board on the price of natural gas, and the real decisions are being made by the federal energy regulatory commission in Washington, or one cannot go to his or her Member of Parliament and say that something should be done about foreign investment because that foreign-owned mining company is going to shut down in my town and they are told, "Sorry, we have nothing to say about it", the message will get through that perhaps we had better start electing people in Washington. Perhaps we should go where the power is. Get a