

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

I believe that the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the U.S. falls into that category, a category in respect of which people have to address the issue on the basis of their own individual beliefs.

When I hear people discuss the Free Trade Agreement from the perspective of business, it makes me nervous. I understand as well as anybody why the Thomas d'Aquinos of Canada, why big business in Canada came down in favour of the deal—and I do not blame them for that. I am not one who believes that big business should be prevented from speaking out. I am always disappointed when I hear my friends to my left talk about their fear of profits. I believe in profits; I believe in business. But, I also believe in Canada. I believe it is a charade to suggest that anyone who questions the free trade deal as constituted in its present form is somehow letting down capitalism, is somehow letting down the market-place and the businessmen and businesswomen who make this country tick. I do not believe that for a moment, and with that in mind I want to address my remarks to those who believe that fear was an element in this campaign, fear generated by the Parties sitting to your left, Mr. Speaker.

I want to assure members of this House, through you, Mr. Speaker, that I never once had to raise the question of fear during the campaign.

When I decided to leave provincial politics and be a candidate for a seat in this place, I had already had a number of people speak to me about their fears. It was not an issue that I had to raise. My experience in the campaign was that people asked me to explain the free trade deal and address the question of whether their fears were founded, or not. That was the question. The fear was there. But why was it there? Who put it there? What brought that fear to the fore? It was mainly fear on the part of those in Canada who would be the most vulnerable under this type of a trade arrangement.

I think it is a shame that we were not able to address those fears over the course of the past two weeks. All we have done is to fan them. I do not think that any man or woman sitting in this House now wants the free trade deal to fail. I cannot conceive of people who hold themselves out to be servants of the people and want to do what is best for Canadians who would now get the smallest pleasure out of seeing one person lose their job or one business close because of the Free Trade Agreement.

• (1740)

What I believe we must do, and obviously we are not going to get a chance today or tonight, over the next year or two is to ensure that does not happen. We have to ensure every effort is made to support business in Canada, to ensure that people recognize that Canadians will stand up for our rights, for our traditional values, and we will fight those elements and concerns which have caused fear among our population.

The reason people in New Brunswick have fears is perhaps because we are not as dominated by *The Globe and Mail*, Southam and other news services, and those who interpret the news and politics in this country, as other parts of Canada may be. The Bangor *Daily News* today has an article in which Republican Senator William S. Cohen congratulates Democratic Senator George Mitchell on his election as Senate majority leader, one of the most powerful positions in the western world. The President of the United States is powerful but the Senate majority leader is also extremely powerful. He is from the State of Maine, a state with which we in New Brunswick are very familiar. Senator Cohen, who also happens to be, by virtue of the American system, a very influential senator, said, in response to a question about the Free Trade Agreement, that he and Mitchell will continue to lobby the new administration to start negotiations immediately with their Canadian counterparts about reducing Canadian subsidies.

I have listened for days to people on both sides of this House tell me that medicare is not a subsidy and regional development agreements are not subsidies. What I want is what I think most people in Canada want; I want the Government to tell me what a subsidy is. It is incredible that a sophisticated lawyer and successful businessman, such as the Prime Minister of Canada is, can really believe that I and others can accept that we can enter into a deal where the single most fundamental element of the deal with respect to the Canadian social fabric is undefined.

It was suggested that the chief negotiator for Canada, and I will come to him because I am reserving some time for him as he reserved it for me in the campaign, would not have the time to conclude some of the negotiations because of a limitation imposed probably by the people who paid his bills. That is legitimate because when you are given a mandate and time frame and you have a job to do, you must do it. However, we are being told we must accept a deal that was put together in two years, with last minute withdrawals by the chief negotiator and a rushing to Washington by