

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Chairman, those who stand to gain the most from the Free Trade Agreement are our children. For them, Canada will truly be a land of opportunity, growth and prosperity. They will use their many skills and talent, but more importantly, they will have all the tools they need to succeed. They will have access to the largest market in the world, the U.S. market.

The bilateral trade agreement will provide Quebec entrepreneurs with many opportunities. They will distribute their products to over 250 million American consumers. The Agreement will also open the door to world markets, because the American market is a world market.

Canada's prosperity depends largely on trade and millions of jobs depend on our ability to export our products.

The small part of the country which I have the honour and privilege to represent in the House of Commons has experienced economic difficulty during the past few years. Job losses associated with the shutdown of factories and companies created this situation. It was when the Liberals were in power, Mr. Chairman, that they closed four refineries. We worked hard to get the east end of Montreal back on its feet and we succeeded.

A refinery closed its doors at the time, in 1984, and we invested \$10 million to save it.

Also, Mr. Speaker, since 1984, 2,500 jobs have been created in Mercier riding. I am proud to run as a Conservative.

I would also tell you, Mr. Speaker, that many companies have expanded and modernized in anticipation of free trade.

Indeed, the petro-chemical industry and others will enjoy increased productivity and return on investment. We will even see a very significant industrial redeployment.

Quebecers see the trade negotiations as a way to achieve five main objectives, namely to make Quebec a productive, competitive society, to develop and encourage investment, to create a substantial number of jobs, to reinforce its technological base and finally, Mr. Chairman, to fight rising protectionism.

In short, Quebec hopes to develop a dynamic economy that can adapt to its environment with more flexibility and to better seize the opportunities for change afforded by the prospect of internationalizing its markets.

I would like to add, Mr. Chairman, that during the election campaign, the Liberals and the NDP used dishonest and unfair tactics and they continue to do so in the House today; they amuse themselves by frightening old people, women and all those who benefit from social programs. You should be ashamed to do something like that.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that the Liberal candidate in my riding during the campaign went around saying, "Don't vote for her. She's pregnant and she won't look after you!" What a disgrace! And what a misogynist! Look where he is today! He stayed in Montreal. He did not come here to Ottawa.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to reassure the Canadian people, all seniors, women, everyone who benefits from social programs, by telling them that their social programs will never, ever be cut. That is not part of the free trade negotiations, as my colleague from Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt (Mr. Whittaker) said so well just now. He should be ashamed to say things like that and to frighten old people, to tell them that with the Free Trade Treaty, their old age security pensions will be cut. I find that ridiculous.

Also, Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote Mr. Broadbent: "The Prime Minister received a clear mandate. The Agreement with all its flaws received the people's approval. It would not be appropriate to oppose it now. I believe that we have exhausted every recourse."

But today, Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, who is not even here tonight, tells us that and continues to delay passage of the Free Trade Bill. I find that shameful. It costs Canadians money—their taxes. How much do you think it costs to sit this evening?

So I would like to ask them to approve . . . I think that the people gave us a clear mandate. They want free trade and I hope that you will support it.

• (2300)

[*English*]

Mr. Fontana: Mr. Chairman, I feel proud and privileged to represent the people of London East and I thank them very much for their confidence.

First let me say that the announcement by the Deputy House Leader that he intends to invoke closure again tomorrow is totally unacceptable and irresponsible. What it means, again, is that the majority of people in Canada is denied the opportunity of putting forward its