

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): We know you were convicted of being an extrovert.

Mr. Crosbie: Here is a saying I came across the other day that might apply to the honourable opposition critic with respect to trade. I do not know who said this, but it is very appropriate.

"The man who wants to clean up politics would make a good start by getting out of politics."

There was a most appropriate statement made in 1984. It was made to the present Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner). It said, "Do not avoid politics because there are so many hypocrites. There is always room for one more." It could certainly turn out to be true.

Somebody said that I had been a member of the Liberal Party, to which I plead guilty. In 1971, however, I became mature and sensible. Always have an appropriate quote in your pocket. Here is what Lord Halifax said:

"Ignorance makes most men go into a political party, and shame keeps them from getting out of it."

It did not keep me from getting out. I recommend that the hon. gentlemen and ladies opposite consider what Lord Halifax said. Do not stay in the Liberal Party simply because you are ashamed.

I believe there is evidence of more reasonableness in the Liberal ranks than there is in the NDP ranks. We must be fair here. The Liberal Party, experienced in the arts of governing a country which they have governed for most of the last century, are more reasonable. They have accepted the fact that the election is over and that the Conservatives have been returned with a majority. The NDP has not accepted that. They have not accepted their Leader. They are having their strings pulled by Bob White and the seven dwarfs, by Shirley Carr. They are all being manipulated over there. Nobody knows who is really in charge. However, I do not want to aggravate them, this being the Christmas season.

What did the Liberal Leader say following the election? We know that he wanted to let the people decide. That was a mistake, but they did decide. They did not decide the way the Leader of the Liberal Party wanted them to decide. Just after the election he said this in *The Ottawa Citizen* of November 23:

"He said Tuesday his Party will not block free trade legislation. The people have decided they want the deal."

Then in the same paper, he said: "The people are always right". This is a very sensible position to take.

He said in *The Gazette* of Montreal on the same day, "We will be restating our position on the matter". Well, by golly, he was right. We have heard that restated a thousand times, but, you know, we let the people decide. "Having stated our case, we let the matter proceed." That was *The Toronto Sun* of November 23. These are the statements of the Leader of the Liberal Party.

We have had a debate. I have not added up the exact number of hours we have debated this matter since December 12. Perhaps some genius who is good at mathematics could do it quite quickly. We have had many additional hours of debate on the Free Trade Agreement. Everybody has stated his or her position. I know the position of the Liberal Party. I know the position of the NDP. I know the position of the Progressive Conservative Party. The public of Canada knows the positions of the three Parties. The public of Canada is paying no more attention to this Chamber at the moment than they are paying to the man in the moon. They are not paying any attention to politics, with the possible exception of the controversy in connection with language matters in Quebec and other parts of Canada. The public may be paying some attention to that, but they are not paying attention to people who are here debating for the thousandth time a matter on which they decided on November 21.

If they gave us any thought they would say, "What did we elect to the House of Commons? What kind of a charade and farce is the parliamentary system in Canada that this process can go on, that we should be here night after night until one or two o'clock in the morning hacking over matters already decided by the people of Canada? How much longer is it to go on? Is the New Democratic Party to have this continue until Saturday morning?"

An Hon. Member: If need be.

Mr. Crosbie: If need be? Well, there is going to be a "need be", because we are not adjourning until the House deals with this matter. You can be sure of that. Whether it is two o'clock on Saturday morning or Sunday morning or Boxing Day, this is going to be dealt with. That is the position of the Government.

An Hon. Member: Dictatorship.

Mr. Crosbie: Good, the critic is back. I hope the bright light from the West will listen as well.

Mr. Barrett: Are you speaking to me?