

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

"Bill C-2, an Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America, be not now read a third time, but that the Bill be referred back to the Committee of the Whole for reconsideration of Clauses 3 through 150, inclusive."

If this amendment is accepted it will give Canadians a chance once again to be heard.

• (1630)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In view of the seriousness and importance of the debate on Bill C-2, particularly at third reading, I would ask that the House grant permission to our official spokesperson, the Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon), to have equal time with the two previous Members who had the floor previously.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, the critic with the New Democratic Party has had private discussions with his colleagues in other Parties and requested extra time, but to grant equal time with the opposition Party and the Government is a little unrealistic. He made a certain commitment to us as to the extra time, but made it very clear to the House that he would not take advantage of that. I think we will just leave it at that.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, I think it would be proper and right that my colleague, the Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon), be given proper opportunity to express the case of his Party at third reading, and we would certainly be in agreement that he use the time allowed to him, subject to discretion.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Chair is in somewhat of a quandary. Is there unanimous consent to give the Hon. Member extra time, or is there a time limit? I would like the House to help me on that point.

Mr. McDermid: Madam Speaker, I suggest that the Hon. Member take his 20 minutes which he is allotted and, when that is up, ask for extra time—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: It is Christmas.

Mr. McDermid: We are following the rules of the House. Relax. At that time it will be given to him, with discretion, to which he has committed himself to us. So we will carry on as required by the orders of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I do not have unanimous consent at this time. I will give the floor to the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon).

Mr. Langdon: Madam Speaker, the last time this situation arose in the previous Parliament I was told that it was not possible to ask for extra time at the end of one's 20 minutes. That is why I make the request to the House. If you were to apply a limit of 40 minutes, I think that would be certainly satisfactory to me.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Whether the Hon. Member asks for it at this time or a later time, the Chair would still need unanimous consent to grant the Hon. Member more than 20 minutes, which would now be his according to our rules.

As I do not have unanimous consent at this time—

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand the dilemma facing the Speaker. I would simply propose that Parties grant unanimous consent to the Member for 40 minutes to give his speech at third reading.

Mr. McDermid: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I do not have unanimous consent at this time. The Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon).

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, I regret that the Minister of State for International Trade (Mr. McDermid), despite our earlier discussions, has not giving unanimous consent to that suggestion.

I want to begin with what I believe many Canadians feel as this debate comes to a close, that is, a lament for a nation. It is a lament which was summed up not by New Democrats, not by a socialist, not by a Liberal, but by a Conservative by the name of George Grant in 1965. He said:

To lament is to cry out at the death or at the dying of something loved. This lament mourns the end of Canada as a sovereign state. Political laments are not usual in the age of progress, because most people think that society always moves forward to better things.

Lamentation is not an indulgence in despair or cynicism. In a lament for a child's death, there is not only pain and regret, but also celebration of passed good.

'I cannot but remember such things were that were most precious to me.'

Grant goes on in his opening chapter to say that he laments Canada's death as a celebration of memory: