

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

addition to the ones it does. It could be broader than it is but we will support it.

Motion No. 22, an NDP motion, aims at setting up a commission that would monitor the problems of community workers, community and worker adjustment, sectoral competitiveness of Canadian and U.S. companies, and agricultural pressures resulting from the agreement. The motion recognizes there are going to be problems in every one of these areas and we should know what those problems are when they happen and be able to do something about them, or do something about them before they happen, if possible.

If the Minister or his Parliamentary Secretary wishes to find out what those areas of concern are, what those pressures of competitiveness will be, he should just go back to some of the briefs that were presented to the committee. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture's brief did not take an exact stand on whether it is for or against the agreement, but it pointed out that there are a myriad of concerns that should be dealt with. The prairie pools made representations indicating that there are some concerns over the fact that the whole process is undermining the Canadian Wheat Board. National farmers' unions have listed a great many concerns about agriculture. These are things that the panel should know about before they have a disastrous effect upon the industries with which we are concerned.

● (1640)

**Mr. Patrick Crofton (Esquimalt—Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in my place to offer a few comments on this important legislation. All of us have listened for some days to many observations and presentations made by many Members.

The Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo), in his speech a few moments ago, suggested that any Canadian who criticized the free trade agreement would be condemned by members of my Party. That, of course, is totally untrue. There are a great many Canadians, as we continually find to our sorrow, whose knowledge of the proposal is somewhat less than we would wish it to be. Not everyone has taken the trouble to study the documents or to follow the debates. The people have gained their impressions of what is occurring by reading the newspaper headlines and by hearing little squibs about what is taking place.

The Hon. Member for Prince Albert said that anyone who has studied the matter briefly should not be condemned. I agree with him entirely, but the members of his Party and the members of the Liberal Party are expected to have studied this at length. Therefore, they have no excuse for totally misrepresenting a number of the things that are contained in the document.

When my own constituents ask me about free trade, I tell them that the trade proposal does not guarantee a job, it does not deliver a job and it does not promise a job. Therefore, the claims that jobs will be created or lost are just a lot of rhetoric.

What the trade proposal does is to create an opportunity. It gives Canadians an opportunity to sell into a market.

If a producer does not produce any goods, quite clearly he will not make any sales. If he makes no attempt to go to the United States or to any other country in this world to market his goods, clearly he will not have any sales. Nothing is guaranteed in this life. If a person makes no effort, he will not get very far.

Our Government, any Government, has an obligation as a part of its job to create opportunities for the people, and that is precisely what this legislation offers. It offers an opportunity. Canadians who choose not to take advantage of the opportunity are quite entitled to make that choice. There are no guarantees in this world. Those who do not choose to take advantage of the market that is available to them will clearly not benefit as much as those who do.

I have listened very patiently to a lot of things said in this House which are complete nonsense. My colleagues might be interested to know, just as an aside, what was said by the person who has been nominated by the New Democratic Party to campaign against me in the next federal election. She will remain anonymous and she certainly deserves to remain anonymous. She stood up at a public meeting and said that free trade was a total, dreadful disaster, there were a thousand and one things wrong with it and, as an illustration of how awful this proposed free trade thing is, she said that the free trade agreement already in place is responsible for our testing the cruise missile. That is exactly what she said to an impressionable high school audience. Either she is the most misinformed person in this country or she is capable of telling a bald-faced lie without even having to blush.

Those are the sorts of things that are being said which do nothing to enhance the reputation of present or would-be Members of this House. Members of this House, in name if not in fact, are supposed to be honourable people. They are presumed to tell the truth when they have the opportunity to speak in public. Therefore, all of us have an obligation to look carefully at documents so that when we represent our Party's position or anyone else's position, we do so truthfully and factually.

Certainly there are many things that we can disagree about in this world. There are many pieces of legislation that are complex and there are different ways of arriving at solutions. Honest debate and honest disagreement is a natural state of affairs. It is healthy and indeed should occur in this place. That is why we are here. We are not here to rubber-stamp things but to look at them carefully, prudently and seriously and to arrive at the best answers we can. Therefore, I enjoy members of the Opposition, when they make speeches on this subject in this House or elsewhere, to use some care to attempt to be factual.

Indiscriminate access to Canada's energy is a phrase that has been used. That is just not true. The energy resources of this country have been and continue to belong to the individual