

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

[English]

The Government is desperate. It is telling Canadians that without this trade deal this country faces unimagined economic disaster. I would like to quote what the Minister for International Trade told this House, and you will recall it, Mr. Speaker, on June 22:

"We want to save the Canadian people."

He hollered.

"If anything goes wrong with our trade relationship with the United States, we stand to lose 25 per cent of our wealth."

He went on to say about those of us who oppose this deal:

"They want to endanger one-quarter of all the wealth generated in Canada every year."

That is a prime example of being untruthful, and the Minister knows it. But it is part of an orchestrated campaign of fear the Government is attempting to use to sell this deal. Those who support the deal also do so on the basis of presumed economic benefits. The Prime Minister spoke in glowing terms about our future this afternoon, but what do economists have to say about the Prime Minister's trade deal? They are divided. The Prime Minister says he has a list of 250 economists. I could give him another list of 250 economists who are against it. In the paper entitled *Venturing Forth* the Economic Council of Canada comes down, it is true, on balance in favour of the trade deal. However, its projections, like all projections, are no better than the assumptions that underlie them. Let me quote from the dissenting opinion of Raymond Koskie, a council member and a lawyer from Toronto:

"The Council simply assumes without a shred of hard evidence, that manufacturing productivity will increase by 0.6 per cent annually under the free trade agreement (i.e. 6.0 per cent in 10 years). Naturally, such a positive assumption produces highly positive results, but those results are, with respect, useless. The Council is not demonstrating, but is assuming, that increased productivity will result from the FTA. Naturally, having assumed that the FTA would bring about higher manufacturing productivity, the Council concludes that it would also create additional employment and higher growth."

Those are projections based on untrue assumptions. Moreover, despite its rosy assumptions, the council forecasts that even after 10 years this trade deal will have increased jobs by only 1.8 per cent above the numbers expected from the status quo. The council also looked at the reverse side of the coin. It examined the implications if Canada rejected the deal and things took a turn for the worst in terms of our relationship with the United States. It developed a projection based on a number of hostile trade actions by the United States, plus a significant outflow of American investment from Canada. What was the result after 10 years? Compared with the status quo, national output would be one-fifth of 1 per cent lower. Output for employed persons would be unchanged. Disposal income would be down a mere one-fifth of 1 per cent. The

unemployment rate would be up by a scant one-tenth of 1 per cent. That is from the Economic Council of Canada.

So we ask ourselves as Canadians, is it worth it? Is it worth it to sell out energy? Is it worth it to give up our right to develop our own resources, our oil, our coal, our gas, our potash, our hydro?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): And despite what the Prime Minister said, even our water, because it is in the deal and all the subsidiary documents point to its being in the deal. Is it worth it to sell out our whole agriculture, our supply management system, our grain transportation subsidies, our potato industry?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I see someone smiling about potatoes. One of the first things the United States intends to do in this so-called free trade deal is to limit all trade in potatoes. Here again, I cite the American implementing legislation. The President, under the legislation, is authorized to negotiate an agreement—and I am using the words of the American statute:

"—to limit the exportation and importation of all potatoes between the U.S. and Canada, including seed potatoes, fresh, chilled or frozen potatoes, dried, desiccated or dehydrated potatoes, and potatoes otherwise prepared or preserved."

So much for free trade on potatoes. So much for the economies of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. They have been sold out.

● (1730)

I ask you once again, Mr. Speaker, is it worth it to give away control of our own capital markets?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Is it worth it to give away control of our own investment policy?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Is it worth it to sacrifice the Auto Pact by taking away the safeguards over a period of years?

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Is it worth it to impede our ability to create new cultural initiatives? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is it worth it? My answer, and the answer of the majority of Canadians in the next election, will be a strong, unequivocal, clear no.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!