

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

hurting the lives of future generations of this country and that is totally unacceptable.

Mr. McDermid: You do not know what you are talking about. You have not a clue.

Ms. Dewar: The Parliamentary Secretary likes to think it is nonsense.

Mr. McDermid: Show me.

Ms. Dewar: We know that we have to harmonize. We know that we spend more on education. As a matter of fact, the only way we have been unable to get Canadian texts and programs into our education system has been by nationalist regulations. It was nationalist regulations that forced large companies like Prentice-Hall to set up branch plants in Canada so that Canadians were finally able to interest these companies in creating distinctly Canadian products especially designed for Canadian educational systems. It seems to me that that does affect our children. We know from now on what we will have to do is to treat the Canadian and American companies—

Mr. McDermid: Who purchases those things?

Ms. Dewar: Those books are purchased by the Canadian book companies because they are forced to print in Canada. That will no longer be possible. That is the kind of thing about which we are very concerned. I do not think a Government that only looks at the bottom line and profit really cares what happens to children or social programs. It does not really care about the resources, the future and the environment of this country. But a lot of people in the House, people in the gallery, care very much and that is why they are here.

We are not going to stand for this. We know this Government will not get re-elected. We recognize that we will be able to stand proud and tall as Canadians. I said at the committee today that we would never see this agreement implemented. I firmly believe that from the bottom of my heart. I know the people in this country will not stand for it. Our fathers, mothers and ancestors have worked too hard to give us a value system, a society and a country of which we can be really proud. We are probably looking at the meanest and cheapest social network in the whole western world south of the border, and yet we say we want to harmonize our programs with it?

Mr. McDermid: Where does it say that in here? That is poppycock.

Ms. Dewar: We will not do that.

Let me quote someone who was a Member of Parliament here to whom I always looked up and I think many Canadians did also. Tommy Douglas used to say:

"The measure of a nation's greatness does not lie in its Gross National Product, in the size of its gold reserve, or the height of its skyscrapers. The real measure of a nation is the quality of its national life . . . what it does for the least fortunate of its citizens, and the opportunities it provides for its youth to live useful and meaningful lives."

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. How is it that several times you called people to order when they interrupted the Minister but you never call people to order when they interrupt opposition Members?

• (2140)

Mr. Holtmann: Because they are not important.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Chair recognizes the Hon. Member for Richmond—Wolfe.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, I also welcome this opportunity to speak in this important debate concerning motions numbered 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

My remarks will more specifically concern motions 12 and 13, and especially Motion No. 12, which reads as follows:

"For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be interpreted so as to affect or preclude the continuation of existing or the establishment of new regional development programs."

. . . and now for Motion No. 13, which reads as follows:

"For greater certainty, nothing in this Act shall be interpreted so as to affect the continuation of existing or the establishment of new Canadian social programs, including medicare, unemployment insurance, daycare, pensions, minimum wage laws, labour laws and maternity benefits."

Mr. Speaker, I listened to all the previous speakers, and I think it is rather astonishing that what we propose in the way of amendments is relatively simple, in the circumstances. The Government is saying: There is no problem, there will be no consequences. What the FTA will do is create jobs and boost growth in this country, and there will be no consequences of any kind.

What we want to do in the House today is improve the Bill by adding a few simple sentences. These additions would provide guarantees that in the circumstances I think are altogether essential, reasonable and indispensable.

We are told that the FTA will have no impact on job creation or regional economic development . . . so they say! But if they are so sure and spend so much time saying they are so sure, I wonder what their motives are. Why not include guarantees in the FTA so that Canadians know what to expect?

Mr. Speaker, in a survey, American manufacturers were asked what they felt were the ideal conditions for setting up a company. According to the findings of this survey, a good business climate in the various States depended on the following conditions, ranked as follows: low taxes; low union membership; low insurance rates for work-related accidents; low unemployment insurance benefits; low energy costs; and fewer days lost as a result of work stoppages.

Mr. Speaker, if the same survey, evaluation or analysis were made in Canada, the conclusions would obviously be the same.

I think this is the kind of language we can expect from entrepreneurs, from industry, from those who create the jobs. It is quite normal and quite reasonable for a company to want to cut costs. So what will happen when the FTA is implemented? There will be three consequences, Mr. Speaker. There will be howls of "unfair" from the Americans because our conditions will not be the same as theirs. This could affect us in various ways. There might be demands that we "harmonize", over time, various programs that are characteristic of our way of doing things, as opposed to the U.S.