

Extension of Sittings

Canada from starting again on the road to prosperity we had opened over these last few years.

• (1740)

[English]

Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kooteney West—Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted some four years ago, I rise to oppose the arrogant behaviour of an arrogant government. The only difference between today and some four years ago, when I last rose in this House, is that the arrogant government is now a Conservative Government instead of a Liberal Government. That seems to be the only difference except in the matter of degree.

For a while that previous government, Mr. Lalonde in particular, had begun the process of weakening what was then called the Foreign Investment Review Agency, and we warned about the consequences of that. This Government has, for all intents and purposes, now wiped it out all together and attempts today enshrine in an international agreement a Conservative regime now and for all time, which would prohibit the people of Canada from exercising their freedom of choice to ensure that Canada remain Canadian in the future.

It appears that my colleagues on my immediate right in the Liberal Party have learned something from their mistakes. They have now realized that rather than let this country drift more and more into the orbit of the friendly republic to the south, they have to take a stand. They have joined with us in attempting to stop the trade deal that this debate is about, despite this particular part of the debate being about the rather nasty rules being imposed. This debate is about preserving this nation for the future and preserving the future freedom of choice of Canadians to determine what kind of society they want to live in.

I always thought things were supposed to be a little better after the second coming, but as the old song goes, I now find out that *It Ain't Necessarily So*. When the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said after election day that it was now time for healing, that the battle was over, I did not know that healing was spelled h-e-e-l-i-n-g. I always thought it was h-e-a-l to which he was referring, and the newspapers and the press obviously thought that too.

• (1750)

But all we have heard since that time is the Prime Minister yelling "heel", and the Tories obey. He says: "heel" and they heel. He says: "heel", and they heel again. The Minister of Trade says: "heel", and they heel again.

That is not what this Member of Parliament was elected to do, and I suggest to Members opposite that it is not their duty to heel to anyone's command as individual Members of Parliament. When the Prime Minister says "heel", I suggest they check the spelling of the word because what we have seen is not the "healing" interpretation of the word, which means to get over some of the nastiness that pervaded during the last election campaign. Feelings were strong and they were sometimes bitter because they were strongly held on both sides.

Individually we all have different mandates from our particular constituencies, but we must attempt to recognize that we have distinctive mandates and that we are marching to different drummers. All wise people are not on one side of the House. We are not necessarily all-wise on this side, but we shall continue to attempt to stop this deal because that is our mandate. We shall attempt to stop it also because we have not had the opportunity to debate it in this context before. If the Government is hell-bent on proceeding with its plan, which we think is wrong, it must attempt to do so in such a way as to preserve certain essential ingredients of the future freedoms of the people of Canada in the process. It must ensure that the fewest people possible are dislocated, hurt, or adjusted whether horizontally, vertically or however the Government intends to adjust them.

The Government has a mandate. It knows it, but so do we have a mandate. We in the Opposition have a mandate. I as the Member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke have a personal mandate approaching some 47 per cent, and indirectly a mandate of 64 per cent of the electors of my constituency, almost two-thirds, who voted for candidates and parties who said: "Stop the deal". That is a majority in Nelson, in my home community. It is also a majority in Trail, Castlegar, Kaslo, Nakusp, Rossland, Revelstoke, Salmo, Montrose, Warfield, Silvertown, Slocan, New Denver, and Fruitvale. In every major community of my riding there was a clear majority, approaching two-thirds of the electors and sometimes much more, who said the deal was wrong and that they wanted none of it. I have a responsibility as do my colleagues, to make sure that the Government recognizes that we have mandates too.

This kind of debate and these kinds of procedures are not the way for a civilized Parliament in a civilized country to attempt to reach rational conclusions and display some sensitivity to all those out in the country who have given us our individual and collective mandates.