

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

What are the choices facing Canadian food processing plants? Well, they can go out of business. They could rationalize their production runs and supply the Canadian consumers from their existing U.S. plants, in other words close their plant operations in Canada. They could decide to only buy from those Canadian farmers who will sell their produce at the same low price levels as their American counterparts, severely hurting and harming the Canadian farm community.

Could our Canadian farms survive this blow? Are we as Canadians willing to pay this price? The Canadian food processing plants and farmers cannot afford to wait for the Government to react to the dislocations and job losses that will occur. The Government's response to the factory closings over the past 10 days do not inspire confidence.

The people of Moncton have had a first-hand experience with the manner in which the Government deals with economic restructuring and the resulting job losses. It is easy to sit in Ottawa and forget how the closing or rather the rationalizing of a plant affects communities across Canada. The Moncton riding has already felt the harsh cold hand of rationalization with the closure of the Moncton shops. The Government promised no massive lay-offs at CN shops. It was correct in one respect, there were no lay-offs. This was closure. A small riding must now deal with the reality of the loss of 1,100 job opportunities in its future. That is not an easy task.

A similar job loss occurring in a city such as Winnipeg would put 8,500 people out of work. Could one imagine the Government tolerating that situation? This gives one an idea of what my riding has faced and will face.

When the 1,100 jobs were cut, what was the response of the Conservative Government? It gave the community \$2 million initially to create replacement jobs, and once the election was called and the hand-out of money began, we received a further \$1.6 million, the so-called final chapter in that story. If that is all Canadians who suffer job loss as a result of the Free Trade Agreement can expect, they have every right to be concerned and suspicious of this Government.

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Earlier today I spoke about the raw deal that Route Canada employees received at the hands of this Government. Can we trust this Government to look after Canadians who are dislocated in the workplace as a result of free trade? Can we trust this Government to deal with the social costs of free trade?

We have seen what appears to be the inequitable application of compensation to workers, to communities, and to provinces. The CNR Shop was the largest of its type of facility in New Brunswick, and the total compensation received was \$3.6 million. The Newfoundland Railway closure compensation amounted to \$860 million for the loss of 650 jobs. As well, the CNR workers in Newfoundland received larger exit packages and better benefits than did the workers in Moncton.

I am not trying to pit the CNR workers in Newfoundland against the CN workers in Moncton. However, the inequity in that situation has to be dealt with. Only in that way will Canadians know exactly how this Government intends to deal with the "rationalization" of jobs.

Given that record of neglect, the people of Moncton are rightly concerned about this Government's word that it will "look after those people who will be adversely affected by this trade deal".

Another key area is that of infrastructure. If Canadians are to compete and continue to export successfully under this trade deal, we must have a modern transportation system in place. It would appear that the railroad in Atlantic Canada will be shut down. The highways in New Brunswick are old and in need of major upgrading.

Is this Government prepared to take under active consideration Premier McKenna's request for a four-lane Trans-Canada Highway? Another question which has to be asked is if the new Trans-Canada Highway is to be built, in which direction should it go?

Canada's traditional links have been east and west. Under the Free Trade Agreement, Moncton should perhaps no longer distribute goods and services, or its raw materials, west to Toronto and Montreal but south to Boston. So, will this Government contribute to the construction of the trans-Boston highway?

Substantial sums of money must be spent by this Government in other transportation areas as well. The Moncton Airport needs to be expanded and upgraded. More freezer and cold storage space is needed at the airport to facilitate the shipping of fish and agricultural products to markets in the U.S. and around the world.

Canadians do not want to return to the days when we were hewers of wood and drawers of water. Canadians do not see themselves as just exporters of raw materials to be processed elsewhere. We want to compete and we have been competing successfully in a wide variety of sectors. The Free Trade Agreement will prevent us from