

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

That is too late. It will not help the people who have been put out of work at Gillette or Northern Telecom or other firms that are closing their doors. It is a bit sickening to listen to members of the Government telling us that new jobs are being created here and there in the country. That does not help those who are losing their jobs. Jobs will always be created, whether or not we have free trade. We need adjustment programs to help those being put out of work specifically because of this agreement. There will be many of these workers and the Canadian Jobs Strategy will not be effective.

The de Grandpré Commission is too late. We need something now, and I ask the Government, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, and the Minister for International Trade to begin to have some sensitivity for those people who voted against this agreement and those who want special adjustment programs.

We in the Liberal Party also propose that there be an ongoing committee of the House to survey the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement, to watch on a day-to-day basis what is happening in the implementation of the agreement. It could check alleged failures and alleged benefits.

For example, such a committee could call the union and workers from Gillette, as well as the management, to find out what really took place. The same thing would apply to Northern Telecom. We could also call some firms which say they are gearing up because of free trade.

We want a special committee that will survey the implementation of this agreement, in order to make sure it lives up to the promises made by the Prime Minister and other Ministers during the election campaign. They certainly made many promises with respect to this agreement. According to them, this agreement will give us heaven on earth. We have already seen the results, and they are not too pleasing.

When we predicted that the agreement would hurt regional development, the Government denied it. We said this agreement would hurt our environmental programs because there are subsidies involved in environmental programs. The Government said that the agreement would not hurt environmental programs. When we said that it would hurt our labour standards and unemployment insurance, the Government said that it would not. When we said that it would hurt our social programs, the Government said that it would not. We want them to put in writing what they said on the

hustings during the last election campaign. We know that the words of the Prime Minister are not enough.

• (1950)

During the election campaign of 1984, the Prime Minister said that social programs and pensions were a sacred trust, but within one year his Government was deindexing the old age pensions of senior citizens. I thought it was rather farcical during the election campaign when the Prime Minister had his mother with him at one of the meetings in Quebec and he said: "Would I ever do anything that would hurt my poor old mother and her pension?" He said the same thing during the election campaign of 1984. He said, with his hand on his chest, that social programs were a special trust and he would never touch social programs.

This election campaign was a replay. It was like a replay of a football game, something with which you are familiar, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member Notre-Dame-de-Grâce has the floor.

Mr. Allmand: The Prime Minister was doing a replay of 1984, saying that he would never do anything to hurt his poor old mother. He said the same thing in 1984 and then went about deindexing old age pensions. It was only because a mass of senior citizens came to Parliament Hill and accused him of breaking his word that he finally backed down and did not deindex pensions. Of course, we in the Opposition led an attack day after day, but when the senior citizens reminded him of his promises, he backed down.

We want the promises that the Prime Minister made during this election campaign, promises that the agreement would not hurt regional development, environmental programs, labour standards, unemployment insurance, social programs, and hospitalization, written in the agreement. We want the exact words of the Prime Minister in the agreement. He said them, let him live up to those words and agree to having them put in the agreement. If he really believed in them, he should not object to that.

I remember when we debated the earlier Bill on this matter last summer. For two weeks, we said that water was touched by the agreement and we asked the Government please to put a clause in the Bill and in the agreement which would exclude water. Day after day, the Prime Minister and the Minister for International