

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

asked across the nation was: How can the nation be healed? Like many here on both sides of this House I spent too many hours knocking on doors, talking and listening to the people in my riding to stand here this afternoon trying to minimize the serious differences we have with opponents of the Free Trade Agreement. I do believe, though we were and are divided on this most important issue, Canadians share a basic notion of themselves and their country.

This vision, I believe, emerged clearly from all parts of Canada, from all segments of our society and from those on both sides of the free trade issue. It is a vision that grows out of Canadian history. It was born with the Conservative Macdonald, advanced by the Liberal Laurier, nurtured by the Social Democrat Woodsworth and brought to fruition by men and women of their Parties represented in this House today. It is a vision of a society that takes great pride in its social programs, that believes in fairness and equity and that has combined individual enterprise and skill with caring community values in one of the world's few democracies.

We Canadians know who we are. We know we can take on the world with our brains, our drive, our energy, our enterprise and our entrepreneurship. Our culture is flourishing. Our standard of living is increasing. Our productive capacity is growing and we are becoming more united, whatever momentary setbacks we seem to face from day to day. We have flung a transcontinental nation into the teeth of adversity and we are winning the battle.

We have built one of the world's great nations not on might but on justice and tolerance. Tolerance is the basis of a civilized society.

The Free Trade Agreement is no capitulation to anyone. It is rooted in Canada's historical development and it is made possible by the pride of accomplishment we Canadians rightfully feel. It is a reward we owe ourselves because of the success we have enjoyed in rebuilding our economic strength since 1984 and in restoring confidence in ourselves.

In the recent election some of my colleagues asked the Canadian people if we can afford to go it alone, to stay aloof from the great trading blocks of the world, Europe, Japan, Southeast Asia and the United States. I prefer to put this in another way. Why should this great people deprive itself of the opportunity to compete in the toughest markets in the world? Why should we settle for second best in anything? The people of Canada answered loudly and clearly on November 21 that they

should not settle for second best. We in this House have a democratic duty to accept that judgment. The people have decided.

Mr. James Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Mr. Speaker, I find as the debate rages on that it is becoming more and more difficult to say anything that is very original or try to say it in an original fashion, but I will try anyway.

As a novice Member of Parliament I was hoping that we could have had a typical discussion with something as major as this Bill is to Canada and to Canadians. I was looking forward to what you might call a typical day in the House of Commons. I think after being here a week I am not sure there is such a thing, but no doubt we will learn about that.

I never deny that the Government has the power to do what it is doing. I do not question that it has that right, but I do question this urgency, this obligation it seems to feel that it has to impose upon us what it is imposing. We, however, will leave that to be judged by the Canadian people in the course of time.

• (1320)

Most Members have referred back to the recent election, and I suppose that is normal because it is current and on our minds. I think it is safe to say that in all instances we referred to the Free Trade Agreement in the last election. Most of us went to our people and told them sincerely and honestly what we thought was good for Canada and Canadians. I believe that we all did that. We did not win the election, but we went with principle about us and carried our message forward.

The questions were and still remain who is going to be helped in the free trade deal, and who will be hurt in the free trade deal. I am still looking for some answers. I will admit that I have only been here for a few days, but there are not many answers coming forward.

I want to talk briefly about the dairy industry. I come from a community not too far from here. My constituency embraces Carleton County. The dairy industry is of vital importance to the riding of Leeds—Grenville. We have done a lot of pioneering in that riding. A gentleman by the name of Talmage Stone, who made the best cheddar cheese in the world, was buried about a week or ten days ago. The late Mr. Stone did a lot of pioneering in the artificial insemination industry. He started his own farm, and when it became impossible for him to carry on because of the growth in the industry, he moved and became Eastern Breeders in Kemptville.