

Free Trade

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For months and months we heard the NDP saying "Don't touch the Auto Pact. You can't touch the Auto Pact, it's too vitally important". The Auto Pact is a free trade arrangement which has brought tremendous prosperity to Ontario. If we had free trade in other industries, petrochemicals for example; if the 18 per cent royalties on Canadian chemicals were removed and we had the opportunity to take advantage of the raw materials and expertise in the West with a huge market to the south, maybe we would not be able to measure the unemployment rates in Red Deer, Medicine Hat, and Fort Saskatchewan. However, the NDP says that that is an opportunity against which we must guard.

Why are jobs in Windsor and Oshawa created through the Auto Pact a wonderful thing while jobs in Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Fort Saskatchewan created through free trade not a wonderful thing? I want the NDP to go to Alberta and tell the people why foreign investment in Oshawa is so wonderful yet would be so terrible in the West.

Mr. Althouse: The difference is job guarantees.

Mr. Andre: The situation in Oshawa is good. It is terrific and we are all proud and happy about that. At present Canadians consume 9 per cent of the automobiles made in North America. We produce 14 per cent. Under the investment plans put in place by the auto producers, by 1991 Canada will produce 19 per cent of the cars made in North America and consume 9 per cent. How long does the NDP think that that kind of inequity between Canada and the United States would exist without the protection of a free trade agreement? How long do they think it would take the Congressmen and Senators from the auto-producing states to demand that the Auto Pact be renegotiated, which it can be at any time? It can be cancelled with a year's notice. How long do they think their sacred Auto Pact would exist without a free trade agreement? It would not last very long. They should be hailing the free trade agreement as the best possible mechanism to protect the prosperity which is now theirs.

On several occasions in his speech the Hon. Member said that the free trade agreement will cost hundreds of thousands of jobs. He went to the absurd lengths of talking about unemployment rates in member countries of the EEC. He suggested that somehow this is evidence that free trade causes unemployment. There are 71 countries in the world involved in free trade arrangements. We have seen the gathering together under free trade arrangements and the lowering of free trade barriers between countries since the post-war period. Nowhere in the world have we seen a country withdraw because the free trade arrangement created the unemployment which the NDP says it will.

I recall when the United Kingdom had its debate about joining the European Economic Community. I recall the Labour Party, soul mates of the NDP, saying that it was

outrageous for Britain to join the European Economic Community, that it would disappear.

Mr. Manly: Tell us about unemployment in the north of England.

Mr. Andre: The Hon. Member shouts about unemployment in the north of England. The fact is that the Labour Party, which knows the situation a lot better than the Hon. Member, has changed its policy. It now recognizes that membership in the European Common Community is beneficial to Britain. Even the Labour Party recognizes that it would be stupid to withdraw.

Mr. Althouse: How did the farmers make out in Britain? They did very well, didn't they?

Mr. Andre: I can understand the NDP saying that Margaret Thatcher does not know what is right for Britain. I accept that as a partisan remark. However, they also have the audacity, the arrogance, the ignorance, to suggest that Neil Kinnock does not know what is good for them either. Of course, the Vice-President of Socialists International is their Party Leader. I guess that makes them experts on everything in the world. They say that Neil Kinnock is an idiot for convincing the Labour Party that membership in the EEC is appropriate.

Mr. Cassidy: That's ridiculous.

Mr. Althouse: The EEC gives farm people a lot of protection.

Mr. Andre: What kind of test is given to people who join the NDP caucus? Are they found walking down the street or do they have to be educated? This is incredible.

Every economic think tank in the country has said that the free trade agreement will be a net generator of jobs for Canada. The numbers vary because they are trying to predict the future which is always difficult. However, everyone says there will be a net benefit in jobs except, of course, the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor. No one else in the whole country says that.

It is not as though the NDP has a great record of predictions to fall back on. On November 8, 1984, we introduced the economic statement on which we ran in the election and which was approved by the people of Canada. At that time the NDP fearlessly predicted that that economic policy would cost 150,000 jobs. In righteous indignation the Member for Essex—Windsor stood up and said, "Mr. Speaker, this is a disaster for Canada". Since then Canada has created 1,000 new jobs every single day. That is what the NDP knows about predictions. It is galling that they stand up and say that the Government has no credibility. They predicted a loss of 150,000 jobs yet say they have credibility.

The British Labour Party recognizes that membership in a trade union is a good idea, but the NDP says that the British Labour Party does not know what is good for them, that the