

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

The previous Minister of Communications is unhappy about it and has talked about this abandonment of the Baie Comeau policy because of pressure from the free trade deal. We have rejection of Investment Canada guidelines for film distribution and rejection of the Raymond Rock report, a very, very weak proposal which the Government has finally come up with. The Minister of Communications (Miss MacDonald) reneged on everything that had been promised to the cultural community. The very, very weak broadcast legislation that we have now is weaker than the present Act. Why, Madam Speaker? Because that is the climate. We will have North American culture because the giveaway is complete by this Government.

This agreement recognizes a North American reality but leaves little room for a Canadian vision, and I am sorry to say that that is the case. The cultural industries that came together for this brief pointed out that they were not surprised that this happened given Mr. Reisman's statements. He explained the amazing Article 2005, the one that is supposed to be the exemption. He explained what that means.

"—new measures affecting cultural industries would be scrutinized by both sides to determine whether they were consistent or inconsistent with the Agreement."

What is that? Instead of making the decision ourselves, we have to scrutinize and ask whether this is something our American friends will object to. The Americans will scrutinize and ask: "Is this something where we can be making more money in Canada? If so, we will not let the Canadians get away with it." That is what Mr. Reisman was talking about. It is an absolute betrayal of all of the statements made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), and Ministers saying that culture was not up for trade. It was up for trade and the Government gave it away.

**Some Hon. Members:** Nonsense.

**Ms. McDonald:** What Mr. Reisman is saying, and what we believe the agreement says, is that actions taken in the past are exempt from the agreement but any new initiatives are not. As a result, all of the provisions in the agreement which apply to the economy in general apply to the cultural industries as well insofar as new measures are concerned. Yet we need new measures to strengthen our Canadian culture.

The present Government of Canada has bound its own hands in a way no previous Government in our history has ever prepared to do. Under the constraints imposed by this agreement, vitally important cultural initiatives such as Bill C-58, the capital cost allowance, the Baie Comeau policy could never have been implemented. This Government has neutralized its own cultural policy initiatives. I say shame on this Government for having done that.

People in my riding are very concerned about this. Ordinary Canadians are telling me that they have pride in Canada. They

like our country. They want our medicare system, our cultural system and the fairness that we have that has taken years to develop. A Macedonian Canadian said that if he wanted to live in the United States he would have emigrated there, and a Latvian Canadian told me the same earlier this week. These are sentiments of people who care about their country, who have confidence that we can solve our own problems, that we can do things ourselves.

We can trade with the world. We can develop our own economy. We can create jobs. We do not have to sell our soul or our resources cheaply. These are Canadians who have confidence in Canada and these are the people who have been betrayed by a Government which talked about patronage when all it wanted to do was get to the trough faster than the previous Liberal Government.

It is a Government that talked about the sacred trust and then moved immediately to deindex the old age pension. Fortunately, it did not get away with it. This is a Government that is saying "trust us" as we take this next step. Canadians cannot trust this Government. Canadians have a different vision. We have worked hard to build Canada. Seniors, who are opposed to this deal, think of all the work they have put in over the decades that is being given up by a Government that cannot be trusted and by a Government that has no mandate to act.

I have confidence in Canada. I have confidence that we can create jobs here. I have confidence that we can solve our problems, not easily, but we can do it. Certainly if we give up the very tools of our political sovereignty we will not be able to solve our problems.

We live in a changing world and we need the tools to change, to adapt, to create new solutions to problems. The future will be different from the past. The *status quo* will not go on. This Government wants us to give up the very political sovereignty we need in order to solve those problems in the future.

It is not this House that will be making the fundamental decision. The Government's course has been decided. It is using its majority and closure on this Bill. Canadians are going to make the decision at the next election, and I hope that next election will come soon. Canadians will decide that the Government does not merit their confidence, that they have been betrayed by it. The fundamental decision will be made not on Bill C-30, not tomorrow when we vote on it because that is a foregone conclusion, but this Government will be accountable to Canadians. They are not going to like the results because Canadians still have confidence in their country and they have lost confidence in this Government.