

community of Cow Bay, located on the rugged shores of the Atlantic, as well as the communities of North Preston and East Preston, the largest black communities in Nova Scotia.

All of these communities add to the cultural diversity and richness which is the riding of Dartmouth.

I should also like to congratulate my colleagues from Nova Scotia on their successful election and re-election to Parliament, and as well I extend my congratulations to the Speaker on his re-election to the chair and on his re-election in the riding of Vancouver South.

For the past two weeks I have listened carefully to the debate that has taken place, first on the procedures in this Chamber and then on the substance of the Government's motion to put into effect the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States of America.

As a new Member but not a rookie to politics, I shudder at the attempt by this Progressive Conservative Government to once again stifle a full and unencumbered debate on a Bill that would initiate the economic union of this great nation with the United States of America.

As I listened and watched, I remembered quite clearly that it was exactly this type of disregard for the House of Commons and for the people of Canada that convinced me to run as the Liberal candidate in the riding of Dartmouth. I did so because I saw a Government led by a Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) who cared less about the preservation of the unique fabric of this country than he did about building his so-called special relationship with the President of the United States.

I saw a Government which refused to listen to any point of view on the trade issue but its own; I saw a Government that would close down debate in the House of Commons by wielding its majority to block a full public hearing on the proposed deal, a hearing which could have taken place by way of extensive committee hearings held across this nation. I saw a Government that refused to allow its own studies dealing with the potential negative impacts of the trade deal to see the light of day.

I stand in my place today to voice my opposition and that of the people of Dartmouth to the trade legislation, Bill C-2. I, and the overwhelming majority of the people of Atlantic Canada, believe that this deal, if passed unamended, will negatively alter the very structure of this nation.

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

The reality of Canada, Mr. Speaker, is that it is a nation of regions, each distinct, each with its own strength, but collectively forming the unique fabric that is Canada.

Our forefathers saw the potential of what Canada could be. They believed, as I believe, that a great nation could be forged on an east-west axis, and they resisted the pressures of continentalism. They believed that there was a better way than the American way. They recognized that the vast resources and wealth of this nation could be used to overcome the obstacles of geography.

Successive Governments have used national programs and policies to redistribute wealth from the have to the have not regions of this great nation.

I and my colleagues in the Liberal Party believe that every Canadian should have the right to make a decent living in the region in which he/she chooses to live and that he/she should enjoy the same level and quality of social benefits regardless of income and choice of location.

We have used the richness of this great nation to create fairness and equality of opportunity—in the Atlantic, in the North, and in the West. In short, Mr. Speaker, we have used regional development as a tool for nation building.

Anyone who submits to the reality of Canada as a nation of distinct and vibrant regions should be concerned about the implications of the Free Trade Agreement on regional development programs. This Government is asking us to approve the Free Trade Agreement, knowing full well that it is a flawed document, a document that puts at risk the very ability of the national Government to use regional development programs to bring about level playing fields within Canada.

We have before us, Mr. Speaker, a deal that has no exemption for regional development programs, a deal that has no definition of "subsidy", a deal that trades away our very ability to have made-in-Canada policies for the future development of this nation.

It is a deal that stipulates that once we integrate our economies, the United States and Canada will negotiate the definition of a subsidy and will work toward the elimination of same. These things are all still on the table, Mr. Speaker.

How does this Government explain this outrageous deal? How many more concessions will Canada have to make? The Government says: "Trust us."