

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

• (2410)

Mr. Karpoff: I would rather be a windbag and be truthful than be dishonest about it.

There is also pressure from Canadian companies to cut social programs and health care. I just want to tell Hon. Members a few little things about what the Chamber of Commerce has done, that great friend of socialism. The Chamber of Commerce, in a letter written during the election campaign to the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) with regard to regional development and social programs, said that this agreement would not affect its existing programs, and that the Chamber of Commerce has no fear whatsoever that our social or developmental programs will be affected by the FTA, and it has said so repeatedly.

A week after the election, what happened? The Canadian Chamber of Commerce says, of course we have to have a commission to look at the high cost of our social programs, and it called on the Government to reduce spending on social programs in order to reduce the debt.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has said the same thing. It said that Canadian manufacturers face tough battles with foreign rivals who pay lower wages and do not have to pay unemployment insurance premiums. Canadian corporations, during the election campaign, were saying they would not put any pressure on the Government to reduce social spending or programs. Within a week after the election, they were demanding that the Government cut social programs and spending as a way to reduce the deficit. We in the New Democratic Party have better solutions for reducing the deficit, including not spending \$20 billion on nuclear submarines.

Mr. Dick: The people didn't buy it, though.

Mr. Karpoff: In Surrey, British Columbia, they bought many things.

The third area in which there will be an impact on social programs and health care is privatization. One of the things that we in British Columbia are beginning to understand, and all Canadians will begin to understand, is that with a right-wing Premier like Bill Vander Zalm, the leading edge in privatization, followed by Grant Devine, soon to be followed by many other conservative people right across Canada, the B.C. Premier has been privatizing highway maintenance and such things as health care and social services, including our mental hospital.

Under Article 1402 and 1403, American corporations have a right to run those services here, and they also have a right to bring their personnel here. Not only will the for-profit American corporations come up here to run our health care and social services, but we will lose jobs because they will be bringing up their own personnel.

The Conservatives keep saying that the agreement does not affect social services, but let me just read a list of the professionals who can come here without proper visas. They include accountants, engineers, scientists, physicians, dentists, nurses, psychologists, teachers, economists and social workers, and they will take jobs and turn—

Mr. de Jong: The lawyers were able to exempt themselves?

Mr. Karpoff: That's right. They were able to exempt themselves. This free trade deal, coupled with the drive for privatization, will take our health care system into a whole new area.

I have had the opportunity to travel around the world to look at health care systems, and I know what the American health care system is like. We want nothing like that in Canada.

Another thing I have told the residents of Surrey North is that I will not be like the silent nineteen from B.C. for the Conservatives—

Some Hon. Members: Time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. I recognize the Hon. Member for Manicouagan.

Mr. Karpoff: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Canadian public.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know it is Christmas Eve, and it may be that the Tories are in a more giving mood. I was hoping that the Hon. Member for Manicouagan (Mr. Langlois) might let me have a chance to make a speech since I did not complete my maiden speech in this Parliament. I know that the previous Hon. Member for Manicouagan would have given way to me.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Manicouagan has the floor.

Mr. Charles A. Langlois (Manicouagan): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the Hon. Member that my