

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

They want the Canadian Government to retain the power to implement new programs in the future to meet new and emerging social needs. They want to know that we will continue to pursue the Canadian dream that one should be able to live in any of the diverse geographic regions of this country and not be disadvantaged by it. It is a goal that we are far from achieving, that goal of regional equality. It is one we continue to strive for. We want to be able to continue to use the wealth of the more prosperous parts of our country to invest in wealth and prosperity for the rest of our country. We do not want that investment to be considered a trade subsidy subject to retaliation.

The environment is important to all Canadians however they voted on November 21. We live with vast open spaces with lakes, forests, rivers and oceans. We want to know that we can legislate high standards of environmental protection. We may even want to compensate businesses for the extra costs of meeting those standards and still keep them competitive. We should be able to do this without being punished by our trading partners for what they may consider unfair subsidies.

We believe as Canadians in a dramatically changing economic climate, with or without this trade deal. Workers who are displaced by forces beyond their control should have access to retraining and to new job opportunities. They should have the support of their society in adjusting. We know that with this trade deal there will be winners and losers. What does that mean? It means there will be some jobs gained and a lot of jobs lost. Much personal hurt goes along with that. I have some suspicion that most of the big winners, those less than 30,000 jobs a year, less than .1 per cent of our total employment changes in the year, will be created for those who are able to interpret it and carry this trade deal into court, not for ordinary Canadians.

● (2320)

Who are the victims? We know who the victims are. Every study that has been done has told us who the victims will be. They are women, under educated, visible minorities, and the disabled. Those will be the real victims.

During the election the Minister of Multiculturalism and I were on a panel before the National Association of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women. We heard of about 600 women in Toronto who have lost their jobs. The Minister told those women: "It is because we want to give you better jobs. We do not think that minimum wage jobs are good enough for you". Tell that to those

women now when they are attempting to buy a turkey for their family at Christmas.

Did the Minister return from that panel and find out what is happening to those women? Did he talk to the Minister of Employment and Immigration and say: "What can we do for those women?" The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mrs. McDougall) has told us time and again this week that the Government is taking no pro-active role in helping displaced and dislocated workers. It is sitting back and waiting to see, standing by.

A good adjustment program plans for change and anticipates change. It involves the employers and the businesses in predicting change so that the Government can help people to adjust to that change. Why wait until they are out of work to provide the training that they need? That is the whole new approach needed.

These values are common values held by a vast majority of Canadians. They cross Party differences, and they cross regional differences. They are the values that the Prime Minister assured Canadians were not affected by the trade deal. The Canadian people took the Prime Minister at his word.

My Party lives by those values. That is why we prepared amendments to be introduced in the House, to attempt to reconcile the views of those who voted for the deal and of those who voted against the deal, to ensure that those fundamental freedoms of a sovereign nation are not at risk. We have been prevented from putting those amendments. Why has the Government refused to put on paper the promises that it made to the people of Canada during an election campaign? There is only one answer.

The Canadian public knows that over the years Liberal Governments have taken every opportunity to expand trading links throughout the world. This remains the case today with our Party. We want to look beyond our borders, to look at bold and imaginative plans to open up huge new markets in Mexico, Central and South America, and in every corner of the globe. We should be able to do this without jeopardizing the various development and social programs which enrich life for Canadians.

During the election the Prime Minister assured Canadians that social programs were not at risk. If that is the case, why did the Government refuse even to allow an amendment to put those assurances in writing? What is so dangerous about an amendment that would have stated that nothing in the agreement shall be interpreted