

give it back to the people who will do that job, the people in whom we have confidence to do that job. I believe in their hands, as they have capably shown in the past, lies the future and prosperity of this country.

I do believe that the debate has ended. Now it is time for healing and for preparing to lead Canada into the 1990s, and for that we all have a responsibility.

I am sure that each Member in the House wants the best for his or her constituents, and is willing to work hard to achieve that end. My goal and pledge is to make certain that the people of York North have a Member who, regardless of any partisan views, strives for the benefit of the people of the riding. As new opportunities for prosperity unfold, as new quests for learning arise, and when adjustments are to be made, I will bring the maximum extent of my abilities to their endeavours. I am sure that all Members will do the same in bringing Canada into this new and exciting era.

To you, Madam Speaker, to the staff of the House of Commons, and the Members here, I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

Mr. George S. Rideout (Moncton): Madam Speaker, may I take the opportunity to thank the people of Moncton for the confidence that they have placed in me by electing me as their representative. Like many other new Members in the House of Commons, this is our first opportunity to speak in the Chamber, and I do so with a great deal of emotion knowing that both my mother and my father have stood in this House and given a maiden address.

The issues of their day were also issues of great nation building. They dealt with such issues as the flag debate, medicare, and the B and B Commission back in the 1960s, to name a few pieces of legislation going on then. Now it is my time and again we are dealing with an issue of major importance for our country.

The Government's trade legislation and the manner in which it has been handled since day one of this debate is indicative of the manner in which the Government has approached many crucial issues. There has been no information, no discussion, and little debate in the hope of quick passage of the legislation.

The people of Moncton were given an opportunity to speak on the free trade deal. In fact it was their first opportunity to vote on the deal with the result that I am very proud to be standing in the House representing the riding of Moncton.

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

The bilingual riding of Moncton is a centre for education, transportation, communication, and manufacturing. Its geographic location in the heart of the Maritimes makes it a natural distribution point into central Canada, Atlantic Canada and, as we say, the Boston States. We are also a tourist destination point with Magnetic Hill and the tidal bore, to name a few of the many attractions in our area.

The country we know and love as Canada was built on the twin strengths of agriculture and the railroad system. Moncton is no exception.

The future prosperity of Canada depends on a fair and equitable distribution of Canada's wealth. We must protect and support our agricultural sector, maintain our social programs, and provide the conditions for strong economic growth in all regions of Canada. The passage of the free trade deal jeopardizes these important issues.

The agricultural community has been ignored and abused by the Government, and its concerns are at the bottom of the Government's agenda. My view, and that of the Liberal Party, is that Canadian agricultural producers have not been taken care of by the Government.

The Canadian food processing industry has been taking a beating under this deal. Its concerns, expressed over and over, have fallen on deaf ears. The food processing industry processes raw materials, in this case, Canadian eggs, Canadian cheese, Canadian meats, and Canadian fruits and vegetables produced all across Canada. Under this deal, the processing sector will be trapped between the Canadian farmers and their American counterparts.

Canadian supply-management programs have stabilized production, supply, and the price of agricultural commodities for our farmers. However, the price we pay is moderately higher for basic dairy and poultry commodities in Canada than it is in the United States. Not only can American owned plants buy from American farmers cheaper than they can from Canadian farmers, certain other structural differences give these firms a definite advantage.

American owned plants can take advantage of significant economies of scale. Their plants are large and the production runs longer. Canadian based plants face certain climatic difficulty. Canada can be a cold and harsh land, albeit beautiful. The realities of our climate lead to a shorter growing season and lower crop yields. The American sunbelt growing area can deliver year round supplies of agricultural commodities.