

During the election campaign, we saw the leader of a party make tearing up the agreement one of his main themes. Today, we have on two or three occasions witnessed certain Hon. Members of this august body also tear up other official documents. That is exactly how, throughout the election campaign that ended in our victory on November 21, the Members of those two parties showed the Canadian people that they were not unifiers like our leader and our party, which bring the Canadian people together; rather, they tear the Canadian people apart. They do not care about the prosperity of the country, but are more concerned with spreading mistrust among the Canadian people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Corbeil: Mr. Speaker, the reason we obtained the confidence of the majority of Canadians is that we bet on their maturity and intelligence rather than on their mistrust and their fear of the future. We are convinced that the Canadian people are mature enough to have confidence in the future and to know that the Government they chose four years ago and returned to power recently is one that cares about the interests of all Canadians, men and women, one that says the same thing in all parts of Canada, and not one that says one thing in the West against Quebec, something else in the Maritimes against Ontario and something else again in other parts of Canada. The Progressive Conservative Party is a Party and a Government that says the same thing throughout Canada, that speaks the language of reason and invites the citizens of Canada to a prosperous future, based on constructive actions.

Over these last few days, Mr. Speaker, they tried constantly to avoid addressing the purpose for which Canadian citizens sent us here, that is to finalize the free trade agreement. And that lack of credibility is being shown by the actions of those people over these last few months. First, they asked for elections to be held on the issue of free trade, suggesting we had no mandate to implement free trade, there should be an election on that.

An Hon. Member: Let the people decide!

Mr. Corbeil: Let the people decide!, as I am reminded by my friend Vincent. The people decided on November 21. They decided by giving us a majority. They elected the Party that proposed signing a free trade agreement,

the Party that proposed prosperity for Canada over the coming years.

The people's verdict therefore was very clear-cut, so much so that on election night and over the following days both Opposition Leaders appeared before the media and conceded they had failed to convince the Canadian people to support their cause. They realized in the days that followed the election that the issue had been settled by the Canadian people and we had to proceed with signing the free trade. But soon, perhaps by chance, the rumblings started within those two Parties and the leadership races got underway, even though the leaders are still in place, they are still on the job. The membership did not wait for the corpse to get cold before it started the leadership races, almost starting to celebrate certain departures and arrivals.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is the reason why those Parties did not enjoy the credibility that would have allowed them to form the Canadian Government for the next four years. Over these last few days they still lack the kind of sincerity that would have regained them some credibility. As we came here on Monday we had every opportunity to take the steps and make the understandings needed in order that during the first four days of this week we could sit 12, 13, or 14 hours a day. We could also have had sittings tomorrow and Sunday and also on the four or five next days of the following week, to give them the number of hours needed, even though the debate already had gone through for more than 33 hours during last Parliament. The possibility was there for each and every Member, new or old, to express his or her views on the matter. Rather, they chose to get into procedural debate, having us go in and out of the House waiting for the bell to stop ringing in order to come and vote on matters of procedure.

Mr. Speaker, the matter of closure of which we heard nothing today . . . Really the debate has raged on free trade under the guise of discussing the motion of closure. Closure is something that is provided for in the Standing Orders, and therefore a procedure that may be used when we want the majority to govern the country, majority rule rather than minority rule using procedural gimmicks to prevent the real debate to proceed, to prevent free trade from being finalized, to prevent