

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Is he saying that Canadian manufacturers do not go about things in an intelligent manner? He is not saying that his Government has been so intent on getting this trade agreement with the U.S.—and I refuse to call it a free trade agreement—that it has put all its eggs in one basket, and our international trade percentages with other countries have been going down drastically since the Government started these negotiations with the U.S. The facts will show it.

● (1900)

I do not trust the Government to carry Canadian concerns. I do not trust the Government to say that Canadian boundaries should not be in Bill C-130, the trade deal. I say they should be in there in explicit form. If the Government of Canada had confidence in its own legislation and in the agreement it made, it would put that amendment in and clarify it once and for all. I do not trust the Government because it is refusing to do so.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): I cannot describe my entry into this debate as a particular pleasure, particularly considering the substance of the debate which strikes me as being nearly trivial. It is fairly obvious to me that this long harangue could be reduced to a few minutes simply by the Government conceding what seems to me to be an obvious point. Unfortunately, we have had what has been described by my colleague from Windsor as a reduction of the debate to a level of plain meanness. Moments ago we listened to the Member for Edmonton—Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) reduce the debate to a level of what must be described as intellectual dishonesty in the interests of regional bigotry.

First, as has so often happened in this debate, the Auto Pact has been referred to as one example of free trade by which southern Ontario, in an exploitative way—which is the implication of all that has been said—has benefited at the expense of the rest of the country. They ask why free trade should not be extended to the entire country.

First, the Auto Pact did not involve giving away the country. That is a minor observation at this stage of the debate. However, the Auto Pact is not a free trade deal of the sort that this deal between Mulroney and Reagan represents. It is not free trade, and anyone who suggests that it is, as I said before, intellectually dishonest or absolutely committed to regional divisions in an unnecessary and exploitative way. The Auto Pact is an agreement by which ensured levels of production commensurate with sales in Canada were reached with the help of tariffs which represented the barrier that had to be overcome on the basis of which the Auto Pact was made to function.

It is true that the Auto Pact did provide jobs in southern Ontario. We are thankful for that. However, let us pause for a moment to consider what kinds of jobs were produced in southern Ontario. Yes, Windsor has benefited from a great many people working on the assembly lines in the plants there. However, with the Auto Pact, engineering went south. With the Auto Pact, management went south. To suggest that this

negotiated trade agreement between Reagan and Mulroney does not at all affect the Auto Pact is just plain nonsense.

Mr. McDermid: Are you against the Auto Pact?

Mr. McCurdy: I find it really offensive that ignorance or mean-spiritedness continues to operate in this debate.

Mr. McDermid: Are you for it or against it?

Mr. McCurdy: The Auto Pact, even to the Parliamentary Secretary, should be recognized as a managed trade agreement and not a free trade agreement.

Mr. McDermid: Are you for it or against it?

Mr. McCurdy: Of course we are for it.

Mr. McDermid: What are you complaining about?

Mr. McCurdy: We are complaining about the attack on the Auto Pact in the interests of an agreement that has no relationship to the Auto Pact at all.

Second, the Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona upbraided my colleague, the Member for Hamilton Mountain (Ms. Dewar), on the issue of Canadian contracts to the World Bank. She pointed out that we bid on about 3 per cent of such opportunities. The Member for Edmonton—Strathcona contested this suggesting that this was not in any way an argument that would portray Canada as being in a situation where its inability to bid is determined by foreign ownership.

I will give you one fact that my hon. colleague from Hamilton Mountain was unable to give, that is, that all of that 3 per cent represented companies that were Canadian-owned. None of them represented American-owned or foreign-owned companies. That may not send a clear message to the Member for Edmonton—Strathcona, but he is so totally committed to defending this deal on the basis of regional differences that he is completely unable to understand the argument in which we are supposed to be engaged right now, that being the question of whether or not this legislation should include a territorial definition of Canada.

We have heard a great deal of talk and nonsense, but the only thing we have heard in opposition to the acceptance of this amendment is that it already exists in the Customs Act. I cannot understand why that is a sufficient argument to involve us in two hours of debate when it would be very easy to include that definition in the legislation. If it is such a big deal and is so offensive, why does the Government include a definition of the territory of Canada in the agreement itself? There is a definition of United States territory and Canadian territory in the agreement. Why then do we have only a definition of that of the United States in the Act itself?

Mr. McDermid: To describe the customs area.

Mr. McCurdy: Well then why not also Canada?