

Free Trade

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, Canada can be more than a junior partner of the United States. Canada has the potential to build a prosperous economy for all Canadians and to do so independently.

● (1150)

[*English*]

The choice between those two visions of our future cannot be made by this House of Commons. It is a choice which must be made by the people of Canada as they assess the different paths on which we might proceed. Do they want to see us sell ourselves out to the United States and become a junior partner, sheltered by the American umbrella? Or, do they want to see us express our confidence in the ability of this country to take its own direction and manage its own affairs?

That is the choice which must be made, and it must be made by an election. It is not a choice which a discredited Government, in office far too long for the people of this country, can be permitted to make. It has to be made by Canadians. If the people across the aisle are frightened of that choice, if they are as frightened of that as they are of being independent in this world, all I can say—

Mr. McDermid: What a joke.

Mr. Langdon: —is that it is a sad day to see leading this country a Government with such fear deep in its heart, such a sense of dependency built into its psyche, such a sense of absolute paranoia about the rest of the world.

Mr. Edwards: You wrote the book on that.

Mr. Langdon: What we in the NDP have is a sense of confidence that this country can go forward. We believe absolutely that this country will make that choice in an election when it takes place and see to it that the government benches of this House are reduced to virtually nothing. We will see a new direction for this country which gives us an independent future and, as a result, a much better future for every Canadian.

That is why we have to fight, and ask Canadians right across this country to fight, as hard as we possibly can to stop this trade deal from taking place. We have to appeal to people right across this country to write petitions, send letters of protest, and make clear to government Members that they are a discredited bunch who do not deserve to govern this country one day longer, let alone take it into an agreement which will destroy our independence in the future.

Mr. McDermid: What a bunch of poppycock.

Mr. Langdon: The Government must not be permitted to do that and I appeal to everyone in this country to fight the Government in its attempt to destroy our independence and our economic potential. It is completely unacceptable and we as proud Canadians are not prepared to let that discredited Government do this to us.

As a final statement in this debate, given this sense of how discredited the Government is, I want to move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Ms. Dewar), the following amendment:

That the words "as being in the national interest," be deleted and the following substituted therefore:

"as determined by the people of Canada to be in the national interest,"

I proudly move that amendment as a measure of our confidence in what this country can do independently without having to sell itself out as a junior partner to the U.S.

Mr. Edwards: Back to the 19th century. What a reactionary speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair finds the amendment in order. Resuming debate.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have sat for I think an hour and a half over two days listening to the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon). All I can say is that the one blessing of having him here in the House is that he is not back at the University of Windsor warping young minds. I have never heard so much gobbledegook, so much distortion, so much inaccuracy, so much fear-mongering. He spends an hour and 15 minutes saying "Beware! Beware! It's a tough world out there. We are going to get gobbled up. The Americans are going to buy us. They are going to destroy us. We will lose our social programs. We will lose our independence. We will lose hundreds of thousands of jobs." Then at the end of the speech he says "We NDPers have confidence in Canada. We believe we can compete. We can take on the world and conquer the world." What an absurdity! On logic he flunks totally.

Mr. Althouse: You would rather cosy up to the U.S.

Mr. Andre: Well, in one part of his speech I think he said "We are not going to allow a situation where people are taking orders from Chicago and Washington and New York." His colleagues applauded vigorously. He left one city out, that is Detroit, the city where the U.S. auto industry is headquartered. That is the industry in which we have had free trade for 22 years—free trade which has brought tremendous prosperity to that member's constituency and the constituency of the leader of his party.

Look at the absurdity of it. Oshawa is not on the StatsCan list for unemployment, they cannot measure any! Oshawa has more foreign investment per capita than any city in the country. Yet do we hear a word of condemnation? Apparently foreign investment in Oshawa is a wonderful thing. Foreign investment in Calgary is terrible! Apparently a job with a foreign multinational in Calgary is a horrible thing to behold, but a job with a foreign multinational in Oshawa is a wonderful thing that we must protect.