

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Mr. Speaker, environmentalists from all regions of Canada are opposed to this Agreement. They are concerned about the negative impact of this Agreement on the environment particularly on water and non renewable resources, and rightly so.

This Government has adopted the principle of sustained development put forward by the World Commission on Environment and Development. Mr. Speaker, having committed itself to this principle, this Government then approved the principle of free trade, which goes against sustained development. You cannot have it both ways. Free trade means an accelerated development of our non-renewable resources. It means water exports, incentives to use pesticides and the prominence of chemical agriculture over a sustained development-oriented agriculture. Environmentalists have good reasons to worry about this Free Trade Agreement. No wonder the Agreement includes water as a very important resource for us. The chief negotiator for Canada, Mr. Reisman is a known advocate of water exports to the United States. He is even among those who support a wild scheme that would turn the salt water expanse of James Bay into a fresh water lake complete with a dam. That water would then be transported, to the United States. Mr. Reisman would like to see nuclear plants built to feed this water up to the American market.

Had the Government wanted to prevent water exports to the United States, it could have included a clause to that effect in the agreement, but it failed to do so.

There is a policy against water exports. There is even a bill that would disallow them. But the wording of the agreement is of paramount importance and if we look at the wording, water exports are a distinct possibility because water is included in the GATT.

Madam Speaker, this is a mistake, a betrayal of Canada!

[*English*]

Environmentalists all over Canada oppose this deal because environmentalists want to see us move toward a renewable kind of agriculture and forestry. That is what environmentalists want to see, and yet, with this deal we will see an ever faster exploitation of our non-renewable resources. We will not have the opportunity to use our resource base to create jobs because performance requirements will not be allowed.

The requirement for research and development, buying Canadian, local sourcing, all these requirements which have been used by other countries and which have been used in Canada in the past, and used very effectively in Québec, for example, will no longer be permitted in the deal on free trade. This is tying our hands for economic development, regional development, and resource management. It is tying our hands in terms of the conservation of our non-renewable resources. It means that Canada will depend more and more on selling our non-renewable resources at world prices—we cannot even have two prices—and selling them without transformation, without getting the benefit of the jobs around them because that will not be allowed.

Environmentalists see an ever faster exploitation of resources. In the case of oil and gas, these are resources in

conventional terms that are not going to last very long. What happens? It means that we will have to go further out. We will have to go to environmentally fragile areas, to the Beaufort Sea, offshore to areas that risk the natural environment for native people and fisherpeople, the natural environment on which we all depend, in order to sell cheaply resources which should be for more than one generation, resources which should be lasting, resources which indeed have often been developed with the taxpayers' money, and now will be sold cheaply, in effect subsidized and given away.

A specific example of what is wrong with this deal for the environment is pesticides which are an important chemical product. That is one item that will be cheaper after free trade. Is this something that we should be happy about as consumers? Unfortunately, pesticides are a major environmental hazard, and measures to encourage even greater use are not something that environmentalists are going to favour at all.

Measures that have been used in the past to subsidize industry, to bring in pollution abatement, for example, reductions in acid rain, could be considered unfair subsidies under the trade deal and could be abolished.

There is going to be pressure to have lower environmental standards because the competition is going to be tough. Industries are going to say: "We have to compete with our neighbour with lower standards. We have to reduce our standards too". The pressures are all going to go in the wrong direction with this deal, and people understand that.

The area of culture is one in which the betrayal of this Government has been extremely important. People in the cultural community are beginning to understand that, and they are speaking up ever more forcefully on it.

Let me refer to testimony by a coalition that is formed of the major arts groups in Canada. Just last month they came up with a statement on the implications of the trade deal, and they are very clear. Each member of this alliance is convinced that the agreement's so-called exemption for culture will actually discourage Canadian governments in future from taking measures to assist the development of independent cultural industries by Canadians for Canadian audiences.

Yes, Canadians can compete in the world, but they have to make Canada look like the United States for those films, and then they can sell it.

● (1520)

Canadians want to see something of themselves. The regions want to see themselves and not just the use of our film industry to make American movies here. Measures need to be taken if this is to happen. It is doubtful if measures introduced in the past would be acceptable were they to be proposed by post-free trade Canada. Therefore, we are forced to conclude that our sovereignty is jeopardized by the agreement. They give a number of examples. The Government has reneged on the capital cost allowance. The Baie Comeau publishing policy was announced by the Government, but it is not being acted on. Takeovers are being allowed with no divestiture.