

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

from my home Province of Manitoba, he did not say one word about that act of grand larceny, the theft of the CF-18 contract—and that is exactly what it was. And it was done for cynical political purposes.

The people of Winnipeg—St. James can rest assured that I shall never betray their trust, as this Government did in respect of the CF-18 maintenance contract. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House to oppose the Free Trade Agreement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harvard: The people of Winnipeg—St. James have entrusted me with the task of fighting this deal, and to fight it every inch of the way. I cannot betray that trust, and I will not. I know that Hon. Members opposite would like us to come into this Chamber and simply roll over and play dead.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know too much of what has happened in the past. Where I come from, they say: "I did not come down the river on a bale of hay." In other words, one is not naive.

We do not trust this Government, Mr. Speaker; we do not trust this Government any farther than we could spit upwind. That will not change. There is simply too much at stake. The future of this country is at stake. We are going to watch this Government. We are going to watch every move it makes; we are going to listen to every word it speaks. That is our responsibility, and it is a responsibility that we will live up to.

My quarrel with the Free Trade Agreement, as it was throughout the entire election campaign, is based on the fact the vast majority of trade between Canada and the United States is free of tariffs, free of duty, without this agreement. We on this side of the House believe in freer trade among all nations. It is for that reason, Mr. Speaker, that successive Liberal Governments consistently worked toward the reduction of tariffs.

I know that during the last election campaign Members opposite endeavoured to spread falsehoods about the position of the Liberal Party with respect to trade. We are not against freer trade; we are not against lower tariffs. We have worked toward that goal for many years. What we are against, and remain against, is this rotten, abominable deal.

While we desire freer trade with the U.S., we also desire freer trade with other countries. We are concerned that in getting the tariffs and duties removed on the remaining 20 per cent of trade with the U.S., we

have given up the ability to run our own country in the way that we want to run it. In other words, this trade agreement jeopardizes our sovereignty, undercuts our sovereignty.

We know all about the supposed special relationship between the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and Mr. Reagan, the outgoing President of the United States. That special relationship got us nothing in a period of four years but photo ops and a silly sing-song in Québec City.

The Prime Minister was desperate for something to show for this special relationship, and perhaps that is the reason for his conversion to free trade. After all, it was in 1983 that the Prime Minister said: "Don't talk to me about free trade during the leadership campaign, or at any time in the future." Why did he change his mind? Why at this point does Canada wish to become tied more closely to the economy of the U.S.?

We should stand back for a moment and consider whether it is not more prudent, while seeking freer trade with the U.S., to continue to pursue the policy of tariff reduction through multilateral means such as the GATT. Instead, this Government has chosen to put all of its eggs into the American basket. It has abandoned the policy of a multilateral focus to trade policy. We are now faced with the uphill struggle of further negotiation and dispute settlement on a bilateral basis with an opposing party that is 10 times our size, with 10 times the economic strength. Hardly an even match.

Let me turn now to the question of subsidies.

Under the terms of the Free Trade Agreement, what constitutes an allowable subsidy will be negotiated over the next five to seven years. This phase of the negotiation is of greatest concern to me. Canada enters the negotiation without any parameters in place in respect of the definition of a subsidy. In the past, the Americans have claimed that our regional development programs and social programs constitute unfair subsidies. I repeat: unfair subsidies. We have no indication that they have changed their minds on that score.

When these programs are raised in the negotiations, will this Government defend them? Or will they buckle under to U.S. pressure, as they have done so frequently in the past? Do not hold your breath, Mr. Speaker.

Here is the danger, as I see it: The Americans will claim that goods and services being imported from Canada enjoy the benefit of unfair subsidies such as unemployment insurance and pensions. As a result,