

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. McDermid: Get your facts right.

Mr. Hovdebo: We have a clause which should be included because the Bill does protect regional development programs now and the need for them in the future. I notice that I am coming to the end of my time, Mr. Speaker, but there are two other motions both for greater certainty, both because the people of Canada do not trust this deal to protect them. These amendments give the kind of protection the people of Canada want. If this deal is to be forced on them, if the Government is to push through this deal without giving the people of Canada an opportunity to decide yes or no, to decide that they want it, this kind of security should be in the Bill. The social, environmental, self-government, and regional development programs which are in place or will be in place should be secured. We should have some security, ensuring that they will be in place after the Bill has been rammed through the House of Commons and has become law.

Mr. Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, in listening to some of the speeches that have been made by the coalition on the other side of the House, I am reminded this morning of Chicken Little crying "The sky is falling". I guess that nursery rhyme is as true today as it was whenever it was written. We have people here who are not willing to look at what is really in the agreement or at what the agreement is all about. The FTA, as the Canadian public and all of us know, is an agreement we set out to put together with our neighbours to the south for the lowering of tariffs.

What we have now is both opposition Parties combining to try to put into legislation what is not in the agreement. We do not have anything in the agreement which does anything about our social programs, yet they are trying to scare Canadian people with misrepresentations about things that are not in the agreement. The legislation before us deals with incorporating into law what was agreed to with our neighbours to the south.

They say that "for greater certainty, we want to turn around and make sure that the aboriginal land claims are protected". Well, the agreement does not address aboriginal land claims. If we took all aboriginal land claims that have been enunciated in British Columbia, there would not be enough land in British Columbia to satisfy them: We have heard Members this morning talk about "for greater certainty", as proposed by the Liberals and seconded by the New Democrats, that "for greater certainty," these are the things that we should be including. I do not know how they think a Government can govern when they try to satisfy the whims of the people who talked about these things this morning.

It really behoves the Canadian public to be careful what they listen to. I fear our Loyal Opposition is not telling the truth.

Mr. Hovdebo: No more so than the Government.

Mr. Belsher: They are not telling the people what is in the agreement. They are dealing with half-truths. Nothing is more

dangerous than when people deal with half-truths and work up into such a lather that they start believing it themselves as being the truth.

We have before us an agreement which has been carefully worked out. We know that it is not perfect. In the area of agriculture, we already found that people in the grape industry were going to be seriously affected. When we discovered this, we turned around and said to these people: "We want to help you, we want to work with your provincial Governments". We have gone, along with the Province of British Columbia, to the grape growers and said: "Here is how many dollars per acre. We are willing to share with you in either taking out the grapes you now have or changing your grapes and replacing them with varieties that you feel can be secure in as far as what you can produce in the future is concerned". That is one small demonstration. Yet we have the opposition Parties standing up this morning with pompous, righteous indignation saying "for greater certainty, you should put into the law that you are going to do all these things for any person that comes along and says the free trade agreement has seriously affected them and they want the Government to bail them out".

● (1200)

We have an agreement. It is a good agreement, and it is time we got on with passing this legislation and putting it into effect. It is for that reason that I stand here today and say that I support the Bill before us. I will be glad to vote against the motions we are debating this morning. With those few comments, I will sit down so we can get on with business.

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, one of these motions deals with regional economic development policy and other items relating to the social fabric of our country. As my House Leader, the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) said, the Government is not representing Canada properly in this trade deal. It is not a trade deal; it is a bad deal. We have to ask ourselves who is speaking for Canada in this deal.

The Hon. Member who just spoke said that there was nothing worse than half-truths. I say to him that there is nothing worse than having the whole truth pointed out to you and refusing to recognize it. This is what is happening in this debate. The Hon. Member for Brampton—Georgetown (Mr. McDermid) said that this did not affect regional development. I would not want to misquote him; I am sure that is what he said.

Mr. McDermid: It will positively affect it.

Mr. Hopkins: I want to point out to him that I have a case in my constituency which proves him wrong.

Mr. McDermid: The free trade agreement is not in place yet, how can it?