

Time Allocation

Mr. Fulton: I will tell you why bringing in closure at this point in time is so inappropriate.

Mr. McDermid: Look at your performance last week.

Mr. Fulton: Let us take a look at where those same cabinet Ministers on the other side stood in 1984 on free trade. Let us look at what the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) had to say, because the Government has no mandate whatsoever to be proceeding with this legislation, let alone damaging the rules and the reputation of this House by bringing in closure in this way.

Here is what the Prime Minister had to say: "Canadians rejected free trade in 1911, they would do so again". "It affects Canadian sovereignty and we will have none of it". That is what he had to say four and a half years ago. What about the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson)? This is in 1984:

Mr. McDermid: In 1983.

Mr. Fulton: In 1983.

Mr. McDermid: Early 1983.

Mr. Fulton: "Bilateral free trade with the United States is simplistic and naive. It would only serve to further diminish our ability to compete internationally." That is the Minister of Finance.

Mr. McDermid: Read what the Minister for International Trade said.

Mr. Fulton: What about David Crombie, the former Secretary of State? He said: "It is silly. Our natural destiny is to become a global leader, not America's weak sister". What about a friend of all Members of this House, the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Hees): "An examination of the facts as they are today gives a clear indication—"

Mr. McDermid: "As they are today".

Mr. Fulton: —"that a move towards free trade with the United States would not be a good thing for this country from either the economic or political point of view". Who else? What about the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark): "Free trade raises the possibility that thousands of jobs could be lost. Before we jump on the bandwagon of continentalism we should strengthen our industrial structure so that we are more competitive". There you have some of the key actors on the government side.

There are some very critical things you have to obtain in a democracy. You have to obtain a mandate for major platforms that you are going to implement. The Progressive Conservative Party not only did not try to obtain such a mandate, they never pursued it during the election campaign, in their literature, during the leaders' debate or anything else. In fact, exactly the opposite impression was pushed through to the Canadian public. The former Prime Minister, the Member for Yellowhead, the present Prime Minister, and the Minister of Finance all said exactly the opposite.

• (1650)

Canadians should be concerned about what is going on on the floor of the House of Commons today because the Government is now starting to hurry on with its agenda again. It spent \$16 million on propaganda last year. A good chunk of it was turned into toilet paper because it was so bad that they could not convince a dog catcher that it was a good idea with all the crap and so on that was being published by the Minister for International Trade.

Let us not forget that during that same time period the former Minister for International Trade, when she was on the West Coast said that people would be able to go from anywhere in B.C. to Washington and bring back all the stuff they wanted and would not have to pay any more customs or duties. Within a few hours, of course, it had to be said that that was not really true. However, the headlines had been made, the propaganda was spread.

What kind of propaganda are we going to get this year? We know that it will cost more than \$16 million. The Minister for International Trade fudged on the figures in Question Period today, but we know it will probably be \$30 million, \$40 million, or \$50 million in propaganda. Canadians need to know. Parliament is important because it focuses the debate and gets information to the media and the constituencies across the country.

Canadians are finally asking the critical question: Where did this idea come from? A couple of year's ago the Conservatives were all opposed to it. Both opposition Parties are opposed to it and most Canadians want an election. Three-quarters of Canadians want an election on this issue prior to it going through the House of Commons. The Government is acting with a knee-jerk response to a very small group.

Canadians are wondering where this idea came from. It has finally been tracked down and Canadians are now starting to talk about it. The Republican convention is taking place in the United States right now. The idea came from the United States. President Reagan was talking about this more than a half dozen years ago. It was one of his main Republican planks for re-election as President of the United States.

In addition, the large multinational corporations in the United States and Canada support this idea. The present Solicitor General (Mr. Kelleher), when he was the Minister of Employment, said that it would affect 800,000 workers in the short term. When the present Minister of Finance was the Minister of Employment he estimated that up to 500,000 Canadians could lose their jobs because of the deal.

The Government wants to close off debate on this issue. Closure was imposed when it was originally brought in. There were three weeks of hearings and now four days have been allocated for debate.