

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

economic control of our country. By so doing, we diminish ourselves as a nation.

One of the speakers from the other side mentioned earlier that whoever pays the piper is the person who calls the tune. I suggest that before too long, the economic control of our country will be in American hands. They will be calling the economic tune for Canada. We are going to have to dance to whatever song they want us to play.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

—I am sorry, I do not recall the name of his riding—

An Hon. Member: Richmond—Wolfe.

Mr. Parent: —of Richmond—Wolfe talked about pensions—

An Hon. Member: A Québécois.

Mr. Parent: A Québécois is a Canadian. Is there a difference between a Québécois and a Canadian? It is the same thing, even here in this House?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Mr. Parent: He talked about old age pensions. I remember a few years ago when a woman was here on the Hill, I believe her first name was Solange, and she spoke to our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), and at the time the Prime Minister wanted to reduce old age pensions. She said to him: Mr. Mulroney, you lied to us. Imagine saying words like that to a Prime Minister! She said: You lied to us. We voted for you, and then you forgot all about us. Bye, bye Charlie Brown! You remember that, don't you?

[*English*]

Not only when he spoke about his sacred trust of the old age pensions. It was not long before even the Old Age Pensions were attacked.

We have heard it said time and time again that social programs will not be touched. We have been asking: "Where does it say they will be protected?" There is no place in this agreement where it says they will be protected.

I question seriously whether our social programs will not be attacked and diminished. I believe there will be pressures brought upon this Government by the American Government when they come to negotiate what is a subsidy. These subsidies, if they are seen to be unfair subsidies, will result in demands that they be taken off or diminished. Who is going to suffer for that, Mr.

Chairman? I submit to you it will be the Canadian people who will suffer for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: They do not care.

Mr. Parent: I do not want to say they do not care. I believe that Hon. Members on both sides should want what is best for the Canadian people. Even if the Americans do not put this kind of pressure on, perhaps it will be our own Canadian businessmen.

There was a report by the Québec Association of Businessmen. They were saying that they will need some relief because of the moneys they are paying for the social programs of the people who are working for them. Already we are getting indications that there will be pressures being brought to attack those people in our society who can least defend themselves.

We have built these social programs over the years, block by block and step by step, so that the Canadian people would be taken care of in their old age. Do we want to become like the Americans in harmonization? If we do, we do not rise to the highest level. I suggest that we will be falling to the lowest common denominator, and that will be falling into the American system. I for one would deplore that very much.

• (2220)

I want to comment briefly on the tactics in this campaign. I sat in the House for a number of years. There were only two times in 10 years that I ever heard the word "liar" used, and on both occasions the people who used the word were kicked out of the House, rightly so. There should be no place in this House for the term "liar", much less for anyone in the House or outside the House to call one of the leaders of our Parties in this country a traitor. These are the kinds of words we heard in this campaign. It is a shame. It brings all of us down when we start talking like that, and we should avoid it.

Ms. Copps: Down in the mud.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Parent: Yes, it is very sad when people say such things.

[*English*]

Someone once said that ours is a MacDonald riding. I guess that means we have working people, like my dad was, who work in the factories and try to make a living as best they can for their families.