

trade deal opens the opportunities for dramatically improved access to 50 million people living in the north-east area of the United States, the largest single regional market in the world, and located only one full day of trucking from the Maritimes, a market that is larger, richer and closer. Now, with free trade, it is more readily accessible than any other domestic or foreign market ever has been to the Maritimes.

To quote again the words of that New Brunswick industrialist:

Now, the Government of Canada is about to knock down those trade barriers with a bold move that will change the economic face of Canada forever. In the process, some Canadians and some Canadian companies will be hurt in the short term. Some of our firms will face new and difficult challenges. But at least we will be unshackled—and for the first time in modern history we will have a run at markets where millions upon millions of consumers will be ready to buy our goods.

He concluded by saying that these are indeed exciting times, and we have unprecedented opportunities to make them even better. "Soon," he said, "we will see the borders opening up to trade that we have been denied for generations". While it may not be an apt analogy in a technical sense, I do instinctively believe that free trade for Atlantic Canada will eventually equate to the beneficial impact which the Auto Pact has had for Ontario.

That may sound like a great leap of faith, but free trade truly does represent finally a prospectus for success in our region of Canada. I am genuinely confident that over the next decade and beyond we shall see economic self-sufficiency emerge within the Atlantic region, and free trade will be the vehicle for such dramatic development.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, do not think that I am not taking any interest in my region. On the contrary, I take Atlantic Canada as an example because I want to show you that free trade could provide vast opportunities for all of Canada. If my wishes come true for New Brunswick and neighbouring provinces, just imagine what benefits the rest of the country could rake from free trade. For instance, if we succeed in stabilizing the Western economy by stimulating exchanges with the huge markets of the American Sun Belt and the Pacific States, just imagine the renewed balance the Canadian economy would gain.

[*English*]

It would be a sweet irony, I realize, if regional economic subsidies might eventually become reduced in

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Canada, not as expressed by the fears of free trade in a negative context but because the fruits of free trade have helped to eliminate regional disparity in Canada and consequently the need for such subsidies. That may sound like a dream, but Canada has been built on great dreams by people who had the courage and conviction to believe they could be attained. I want to say that I believe that our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has expressed such a dream and is such a man.

To balance Canada's prosperity across this country eventually, and to bring an end to regional economic disparity ultimately, is really more than a dream. It is a vision, one which was placed before the Canadian people in the recent election. It is a vision which the Canadian people have strongly endorsed by returning the Prime Minister and this Government with a solid majority. Now, Mr. Speaker, our challenge and that of succeeding Governments in Parliament is: It will take time over more than one or two terms to fulfil that vision working together for and with Canadians.

• (1940)

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, as you know this is not my first intervention into this discussion in the House. I had the opportunity to make several speeches on the subject before the House was dissolved for the election.

This afternoon, when the Hon. Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) rose to answer a question, he once again reminded us and other Canadians that because the Conservatives won the election they could do just about whatever they pleased with respect to this Free Trade Agreement. His attitude was one that they won the election, never mind our positive proposals and suggestions, because they will do what they want.

Others have reminded the Government and the Minister, but I will remind them again that although his Party won the largest number of seats in this election they did not win the popular vote of Canadians. Some 52 per cent of Canadians rejected this Free Trade Agreement, while only 43 per cent supported it. I wanted to remind government Members of that because they have a tendency to forget it.

We know that the Government will ram this Bill through by using closure every day, but it would be worthwhile for it to be a little more sensitive to the concerns of the majority of Canadians. Not only did the Government not win the popular vote throughout the country, the Conservatives lost the popular vote in eight out of ten provinces. They got more than 50 per cent of