

## FREE MINDS, FREE MARKETS FREE TRADE

*Free trade* is a matter of individual right, and all political barriers to free trade violate that right.

If you really want to watch political hypocrisy in action, then free trade is a good place to start. While *Conservatives* suggest that tariffs and quotas against imported goods be dropped, *Liberals* and *New Democrats* are quick to warn of the "dangers" inherent in such a move. But when tariffs or quotas are placed against *our* goods by another country, then *Liberals* and *New Democrats* protest bitterly against such an "unfair" policy, and *Conservatives*, in true "progressive" fashion, react by doing exactly what they preach against: imposing "protectionist" barriers on imported goods.

**Freedom Party** rejects this double standard. Double standards are no standards at all and that's why we only have *one*:

**Freedom Party** believes that the *purpose of government* is to *protect* our freedom of choice, *not* to restrict it.

The right to choose those with whom we wish to trade goods, services, or even ideas --- regardless of where they happen to live --- is a right that should belong to each and every individual in the world. But regrettably, governments the world over (and even our provincial governments) have erected barriers to "protect" their citizens from this freedom to trade with their international (and national) neighbours.

Isn't it ironic how, in the process of denying their citizens this basic right, governments claim to be *protecting* them? Usually, when we use the word "protect", we associate it with protection from *harm*.

A person acting in self-defence is said to be "protecting" himself from an aggressor that threatens his well-being. But where is the "aggression" in offering people better quality goods at lower prices?

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# Freedom Party

Those producing or offering less competitive goods or services might argue that they would be placed in jeopardy if they had to compete in a free market. Quite possible. Yet, in a free society, there's nothing to stop them from taking the action necessary to make themselves competitive and to turn the tables on the foreign imports. After all, under free trade, they would have access to world markets that would be inaccessible under any policy of protectionism. But when governments intervene, even on their behalf, these incentives and opportunities are lost.

*Protectionism* offers no real *protection* to anyone at all; it simply imposes *economic isolation*. Barriers, being barriers, work both ways: not only do they keep others out, they lock us in. Imprisoned with continued higher prices, lower quality goods, inaccessible markets for our producers, and restricted choice for the consumer, everyone -on both sides of the barriers- loses.

Everyone, that is, except those governments doing most of the "protecting". The political forces behind such governments recognize that freedom is contagious: when their citizens begin to reap the advantages of economic freedom, they soon come to realize the advantage of having freedom in *all* facets of their lives.

With that thought in mind, it's pretty easy to see who's *really* being "protected" by *protectionism*: those political interests operating on the principle of using government to control its citizenry.

Free trade smashes the artificial political barriers created by those who would isolate their citizens from the freedom of others. Thus, the less individual freedom a government allows, the more threatened it is by free trade.

Economically, we at **Freedom Party** view the world as a single diverse community with abundant physical resources and the people to utilize them. Cutting ourselves off from our global neighbours is no way to promote peace *or* prosperity because there's only one way to tap the incredible potential that we all share, and only one way to share what each of us has to offer:

Free minds. Free markets.  
Freedom.