

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** The Prime Minister has never told us why he changed his mind. There has been no genuine debate, one thousand plus days of secret negotiation with the United States. This House of Commons has been given just 12 days to discuss the deal. The Prime Minister invoked closure all the way.

There have been no meaningful public hearings. Yes, there were hearings when the exchange of general principles was presented on October 5, 1987, but when the agreement itself was deposited on December 17, last year, there were no public hearings across the country, no opportunity for Canadians to present their views, whether they be members of a trade union or a profession, or having their own businesses, or farmers or fishermen.

● (1800)

A trade committee of the House completed its review after only three and a half weeks. That committee did not travel outside Ottawa. It did not listen to the concerns of Canadians across the country. The vast Conservative majority on the committee made sure it was nothing more than a rubber stamp for the Mulroney trade deal.

A Government, which by September 5, in a few days, will be going into its fifth year since its election, does not have the right to force through such a massive change in the direction of our country without going back to the people in an election.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** It was for all these reasons—a fundamental change in the direction of Canada, no mandate or authority from the people of Canada, no meaningful public hearings, inadequate debate in the House of Commons, and the end of the Government's mandate in this Parliament—that I asked Senators to delay passage of the trade Bill until the people of this country had had an opportunity to pass judgment.

The Prime Minister often talks about the Senate. When his Minister for International Trade was Minister of Justice we had our head-to-head on reform of the Senate and we advanced the proposition for an elected Senate at that time. We are still bound by that and that will be part of our electoral program. Under Meech Lake the Senate still has a constitutional role to play. We have asked the Senators to exercise that constitutional review, to review this legislation, and to exercise that role. I am not asking them to defeat the Bill. I am asking them to delay the Bill until the people of Canada have had an

opportunity to decide. If the Prime Minister wins he can still meet the deadline imposed upon him by the United States of January 1, 1989. I think that is a pretty straightforward proposition. Call an election now. If Canadians vote for the Prime Minister, then he has his trade deal. If Canadians vote for me, there is no trade deal. All I am saying is: Let the people decide.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, to the Government, and to the country: let the people decide between a Conservative Government which is willing to sell Canada's soul for a deal which gives us virtually nothing in return, and our Party which will advance the trade strategy allowing us to trade with the world, including the United States, but without shredding our political independence or yielding on the sovereignty that has made this a unique nation north of the 49th parallel.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I believe fundamentally that this country and Canadians from coast to coast want to be able to make their own choices, in their own way, in their own time, for their own future. Because of that, I repeat, Mr. Speaker: Let the people decide.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I rise with a great deal of pleasure to take part in this historic debate which, in fact, is one of the most important if not the most important in the history of this country in terms of the implications of the measure that has been put before this Parliament by the present Government.

I want, at the outset, to say to the House and to all those Canadians who are now watching this debate from Atlantic Canada . . .

[*Translation*]

—in the province of Quebec, in Ontario—

[*English*]

. . . to the Prairies and to those in British Columbia who are still midway through the working day that there are a number of things I want to clear up in which all three Parties, it seems to me, have strong or substantial agreement. One could waste a lot of time either here in the House of Commons or speaking to the people of Canada about straw men and phoney arguments instead of dealing with what I think ought to be the essentials of the argument.