

This is the important sentence corresponding with what Prime Minister Mackenzie King said:

—but that no such treaty or convention or agreement so signed shall be binding upon Canada until it has been formally approved by the parliament of Canada.

That has been the constitutional practice throughout our history. There are many instances of the signing of international treaties by representatives of the government of Canada, but those treaties have not become effective and have not been applicable to the Canadian situation until they have been ratified by parliament. Here we have an instance where constitutional practice has been completely ignored. The supremacy of parliament has been placed to one side, and by executive action in January, 1965, this country was committed to a treaty with the United States dealing with economic matters, without ratification by parliament.

A year and a half later, in order to validate this agreement, the minister has come before us asking for our consent. You can see the awkward position that we are placed in if parliament refuses to assent now. You can readily realize the disruption that would occur because of the very extensive changes which have occurred in the automotive industry during the last year and a half. A blunderbuss is placed at the head of parliament. We are in effect told to approve of the treaty or a chaotic condition will result in the automotive industry. So, whether Canada has benefited or not, and I am not debating that issue at the moment, parliament in effect is almost compelled to assent to something that was done without its authority a year and a half ago.

• (1:20 p.m.)

How far is this to go? Is the power of the executive to be exercised in the case of other agreements of a similar nature without the approval of parliament or is parliament going to assert its control over the executive? Mackenzie King's oft-repeated statement about the supremacy of parliament must be considered here. The reason I raise this issue is that in the course of remarks made yesterday by the hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto) these words occur as reported at page 4773 of *Hansard*:

There is some talk about extending this agreement to, or making a new agreement with, the timber and lumber business. We can also do it in the plastics business, the chemicals industry and the services industry. We might find ourselves with 1,000 agreements with United States manufacturers.

Canada—U.S. Automotive Agreement

The hon. member then went on to present arguments in favour of this method of expanding our trade. Is this kite-flying by a member on the government side to encourage the minister to make further agreements of this kind, to accustom the people of Canada to the fact that other agreements may be made by executive action without the consent of parliament? The hon. member for York East said nothing about the ineptitude of the present method. He said nothing about the supremacy of parliament. He just accepted the fact that the executive, according to his philosophy of political life, may make agreements of this kind and then bludgeon parliament into agreeing to them.

I would suggest to the hon. member for York East that a cautionary note with regard to his proposal has come from a high source in the hierarchy of the Liberal party. I have not yet had an opportunity to read the book which has now been published by the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Gordon) and I regret having to advertise it as others have done. Nevertheless it may be worth reading. I was not sure that I would buy the book and read it until I saw a comment in a newspaper as to its contents. The contents seem to disclose a sharp division of opinion within the ranks of the Liberal party with regard to economic matters and whenever I discern a sharp difference of opinion within the Liberal party I like to read any article or book in which reference is made to it because I am very much concerned about the survival of the Liberal party.

The newspaper—it is the *Globe and Mail* of today's date—refers to Mr. Gordon's book and says:

He rejected the concept of continentalism for Canadian and United States business saying he would not favour extension to other industries of the 1965 conditional free trade agreement in cars.

So here we find one of the leading members on the government side, the former minister of finance, suggesting there should be no further extension of agreements of this nature and therefore in effect disapproving of the present agreement. I suggest to the hon. member for York East and to others who may be of his opinion that this kite-flying with regard to the extension of agreements of this nature should be checked out with the author of this book, the hon. member for Davenport. Maybe they are saying the wrong things at the wrong time and will cause dissension and disruption within their party, something which should, of course, be avoided.