

Mr. Speaker, the effort of successive Canadian governments to strengthen Canada by putting our trade relationship with the United States on a secure and equal footing is not new. And the Opposition strategy seeking to obscure this objective by encouraging unfounded fears about a loss of sovereignty is not new either.

When trade barriers have been lowered between Canada and the U.S., have Canadians been "hosed, harmonized and homogenized"? That's what the Leader of the Opposition says will happen if the barriers come down today.

Historically, the exact opposite is true. Since World War II, successive Canadian governments have pursued policies that have decreased trade barriers and those same governments have created the modern social safety net, pursued regional development and supported our cultural industries.

King, St. Laurent, Diefenbaker, Pearson did not see any contradiction between tariff reduction, increased exports to the U.S. and domestic social and regional development policies to build a strong and unique Canada. There is no contradiction.

From 1947 to 1986, merchandise exports to the U.S. (in 1986 dollars) grew from just over \$7 billion to almost \$94 billion, an increase of over 1,225%.

The welfare of Canadians has increased tremendously during this period.

- per capita gross domestic product (in 1986 dollars) grew from \$7400 to almost \$20,000, an increase of almost 170%.
- total employment grew from 4.8 million to 12.3 million, up 155%, with manufacturing employment rising by 88.7%.
- public expenditures on education increased from \$147 to \$1237 per capita (in 1983-84) in real terms.
- public expenditures on health care increased from \$54 to \$1211 per capita (in 1985) in real terms.
- direct financial benefits under social security programs rose to almost \$50 billion in 1985, from \$3.83 billion in 1947 for all "public welfare" programs, including health.