

deal. On the US side, Congress had to approve it within the next ninety days under a fast-track, no amendments approach. The Reagan administration's main task was to convince a protectionist Congress of the economic benefits of such a deal. Although Congress' initial reaction was guarded, Treasury Secretary James Baker said that "I think there are so many economic benefits that this will not present a problem" (*New York Times*, October 5).

On the Canadian side, Prime Minister Mulroney said in a speech to the House of Commons on October 5 that there would be a public discussion and a parliamentary debate on the deal (*Hansard*, October 5). Provincial premiers would be consulted, but there would be little in the deal which would affect provincial jurisdiction, according to comments made to reporters by International Trade Minister Pat Carney, making it unlikely the provinces would be able to veto the deal by threatening to refuse to pass necessary legislation to implement its terms (*Globe and Mail*, October 5).

The free trade deal triggered an historic debate in Canada, unleashing partisan ferocity in the House, a sharp split among the provinces, emotional appeals from nationalists, stolid entreaties from big business and bitter protests from labor. Both sides vowed to wage massive public campaigns. On the pro-free trade side, supporters were to point out the agreement's great economic promise, with such incentives as lower consumer prices, bigger markets, secure exports and more jobs. Free trade opponents invoked the touchstones of economic sovereignty, national identity, fears of unemployment and major loopholes in the accord (*Toronto Star*, October 11). As critics and boosters of free trade stepped up their efforts, high-profile pollster Angus Reid predicted that "in terms of selling this issue to the public, the question of image and leadership are going to be more important than the [facts and numbers]" (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 8).

Opposition party leaders were quick to denounce the free trade deal. NDP leader Ed Broadbent told reporters that he was afraid that Canadian sovereignty was on the line because the deal jeopardized Canada's freedom to subsidize regional development, protect cultural industries, retain the benefits of the Canada-US Auto Pact and direct foreign investment. Liberal leader John Turner showed frustration in the House of Commons at having no specific knowledge of the deal, and said that he was nervous about what benefits Canada could have achieved in the "hot-house" environment of last-minute talks between a weak US administration and a Canadian government politically desperate to reach a deal. NDP leader Ed Broadbent challenged Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in the Commons to call an immediate election on the free trade issue, arguing that the Conservatives never received a mandate from the Canadian people to negotiate such a far-reaching agreement (*Hansard*, October 5). He also warned in a statement to reporters that this agreement would lead to the absorption of Canada into the US within the next twenty-five years (*Globe and Mail*,

October 8). In a strong statement of opposition to the deal, Liberal leader John Turner stated at a Liberal gathering at the end of October that he would abrogate the deal if he became Prime Minister (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 26).

The provinces reacted equally strongly to the proposed agreement. Ontario Premier David Peterson was said to be facing the most important decision of his political life: whether to approve the free trade deal. The most skeptical of the provincial leaders, Peterson's concerns centered around the fact that Ontario did more trade with the United States than any other province and could therefore be the most affected by the deal (*Toronto Star*, October 5). He also said he felt that the US got more out of the deal than Canada and that some of his major concerns were the dispute mechanism, investment, agriculture, energy and the Auto Pact concessions (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 6).

The positions of other premiers also became known, with Quebec's Robert Bourassa, Alberta's Donald Getty, B.C.'s William Vander Zalm, New Brunswick's Richard Hatfield and Saskatchewan's Grant Devine coming out in favor, and Ontario's David Peterson, P.E.I.'s Joe Ghiz and Manitoba's Howard Pawley coming out against the agreement. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia's premiers were as yet uncertain, but would reportedly eventually side with the government (*Globe and Mail*, October 5 and *Toronto Star*, November 27).

One important consideration for the government with regard to provincial approval came with a statement by US Treasury Secretary James Baker and US Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter before a US Senate Finance Committee that if the provinces did not implement the agreement "there would be no agreement" (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 8). With the Ontario government flatly rejecting the agreement, Trade Minister Pat Carney stated to reporters that any premier who refused to sign on for a free trade deal with the US would face charges that he "contributed to national disunity" (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 9). She also insisted, in response to the US ultimatum on provincial approval and to opposition demands in the House, that consent by the provinces was not needed to implement the agreement" (*Hansard*, October 8 and 9).

On October 14, Deputy Prime Minister Don Mazankowski denied in the House a complaint from Joe Ghiz of PEI, that the provinces had not been informed of the energy segment of the talks, an accusation which had been echoed by NDP leader Ed Broadbent (*Hansard*, October 13).

Meanwhile, David Peterson sat poised to launch a multi-pronged attack on the free trade deal. He announced that he would not change Ontario's wine pricing laws to accommodate the proposed deal, to which Prime Minister Mulroney warned in the House of Commons: "Any area that's required for provincial jurisdiction, once the duly elected government of Canada concludes a deal, will be implemented. There's no question about that" (*Hansard*, November 23). "As Prime Minister, my obligations are to provide national leadership