

know, Chris Speyer served this riding and this country as a skilled legislator. I am honoured to be the beneficiary of the contribution he made to my riding. He has established an excellent standard for me to duplicate.

The riding of Cambridge encompasses a number of communities: the City of Cambridge, comprised of the former Cities of Galt, Preston and Hespeler; the Township of North Dumfries and the addition, as a result of redistribution, of the south ward of the City of Kitchener. The riding is a combination of urban and rural, and a reflection of the nation as a whole.

This riding has benefited for the last four years because of the economically sensible policies of this Government. The voters of this area remember five years ago under the previous Liberal Government when the unemployment rate was in the 17 per cent range. Over the four years of Conservative Government the unemployment rate in the riding fell to 2.9 per cent or, to put it another way, 97.1 per cent of the working population was employed.

The workers of this region recall that, at the start of the first mandate of the Conservative Government, it established a long-term plan and agenda for economic renewal, and it is clear from the confidence expressed by Canadians that that plan is working. I am proud to represent a Government which created the economic environment that delivered jobs for the riding.

With this record of accomplishment in this riding, a riding which was experiencing one of the fastest growth rates in Canada, why would the voters elect a supporter of the Free Trade Agreement? If there was any riding that wanted to maintain the status quo, it should have been the Cambridge riding.

However, the voters listened during the three years of this debate and on November 21, when they were asked to decide, they decided on me and a second majority mandate for this Government.

Let me review for the House a few facts that convinced the voters of my riding to get on with the job of building a stronger Canada. The Macdonald Commission informed the Canadian people that we do not have unrestricted access to a market of 100 million people as do members of the European Economic Community, Japan, and the U.S. As well, the U.S. has a wide range of non-tariff barriers and regulatory procedures which prevent Canadian firms from having secure access to the U.S.

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

We have witnessed the growth of U.S. protectionism with over 800 protectionist measures on the books that would have had a negative impact on plants, which means a loss of jobs. However, the workers of this riding knew that even if the riding of Cambridge was doing well, tearing up the Free Trade Agreement would not continue this golden status quo.

The strongest U.S. opponents of free trade are the United Auto Workers and the politicians from the auto producing States who want a much more aggressive negotiation on the Auto Pact to Canada's disadvantage. If we tear up the Free Trade Agreement we expose the Auto Pact by itself to a fresh and dangerous challenge. The Auto Pact has enriched and strengthened my riding and the citizens want to continue to build on free trade, not only in Waterloo region but in the rest of this nation.

Hon. Members opposite are also aware that any arrangement entered into with the U.S. must be compatible with GATT and acceptable to our trading partners. The only arrangement acceptable is a free trade area under Article 24. The Opposition has suggested it would attempt to negotiate a series of trade agreement with the Americans which are limited in scope to specific industrial sectors, the so-called sectoral approach. However, this approach was tried by the Liberals earlier in this decade and it did not work.

• (2240)

Members of the Opposition say that the Free Trade Agreement is no big deal as only 20 per cent of our exports still face U.S. tariffs. The critical point is that those remaining tariffs are primarily on manufactured and processed goods. The tariff structure makes it cheap to export raw materials and expensive to export finished or processed products made from those raw materials. Eliminating remaining tariffs gets rid of this disincentive to do more with our resources in Canada. As the President of the Canadian Federation of Labour said, or put it simply: "More pre-export processing means more jobs".

Members of the Opposition have made claims that companies will locate down to the southern States where there are no minimum wages laws. If that were the case, then why would the automobile industry invest so heavily in Ontario in the last few years? Why would Honda locate in Alliston? Why did Toyota pick Cambridge? Why did GM-Suzuki pick Ingersoll?

The answer is, first, that the Canadian labour force is well educated and capable of operating the sophisticated equipment of modern industry. Second, in the Province