

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Our predecessors in this Parliament, our predecessors in the provincial legislatures, have fought and fought successfully to maintain political independence. However, the struggle, without any ill will necessarily being assumed on the part of the United States of America, has been a real and constant one and will go on in the future.

This struggle has changed as the nature of our country has changed, as the world has evolved. On the one hand we have the view that has dominated the 20th century in the United States, that market principles should predominate not simply in the economy, but that they should predominate in all the principal relationships in society. That view has been argued at length and is broadly accepted in the United States. However, I say, as one North American, I am glad that there is still a minor tradition against that view in the U.S. However, that view has been and is the predominant one in the 20th century.

On the other hand, the modern Canadian tradition is something quite different. Our view, especially as it has evolved since World War II, is that in social policy, in regional development policy, and in cultural concerns, community and other non-commercial values should prevail. That is the Canadian way now, and that is what we intend to struggle to make sure exists in the future of this country of ours.

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

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, my Party and I strenuously opposed a comprehensive trade arrangement with the United States when the Prime Minister first raised the idea with the U.S. President during the Shamrock shuffle of 1985. We did so precisely for the reason that I have just indicated. We fought as a Party in the past in this country, and we fight now and will continue to fight in the future, to ensure that the modern Canadian tradition, not the American tradition, will prevail in the major decisions that are reached within our own country. That is what is at stake in this issue.

In 1985, I said that the Government had no mandate to proceed even with negotiations on such a deal because there was not the slightest bit of discussion of such a comprehensive arrangement that goes well beyond, as Members who have studied and thought seriously about this matter know, the principles of trade. The Government in 1985, I said then and repeat now, had no mandate to proceed. Indeed, the only discussion of such

a comprehensive deal by members of the Government that was formed in 1984, as we have said many times in this House, the only views that had been expressed prior to the 1984 election on the subject matter by the Prime Minister, by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, by the Minister of Finance, by the Secretary of State as he became in the Prime Minister's Government, were that such a deal would be completely contrary to the interests of our country.

• (1750)

So there was no mandate. The Government tried to do what it did in the Parliament of Canada prior to the recent election. Following the recent election I said, and the Minister quoted part of what I had to say, that in our parliamentary system having waged a serious, tough election from one part of Canada to the other—and Canadians of good will have been on on both sides—the Conservatives having obtained a majority Government, they do now indeed have a mandate to proceed with legislation, to have it introduced, debated, and at some point to have a vote taken in the House of Commons. That indeed is what parliamentary democracy in this country and in other countries has been all about.

At the same time I say that if the Government of the day—the Government now holding the reins of power in our Parliament—has that mandate then, as it knows, the substantial majority of Canadians voted for Parties in opposition to this deal. If the Government has obtained a mandate to proceed, then we have our responsibilities in the same parliamentary tradition to raise objections that we believe are serious, to point out criticisms, to talk about alternatives, and to use all the rules and procedures that are democratically available to us to give voice to all those people who voted against this deal. We intend to do so. Nothing I said in the Minister's selective quotation following the election contradicted what I say now.

Beyond that I want to speak on one matter of important procedure here in this democracy of ours. I have had other occasions to say it. In my view, on balance, if we consider the rights of the Government and the rights of the Opposition in the Canadian Parliament, we are somewhat ahead of the other parliamentary systems in the rigour of our democracy and in the particular form of our institutions.