

While trade in services is being discussed in the current Uruguay Round of the GATT, it will take some time. Canada and the United States can move more quickly to address these issues in our bilateral negotiations.

That is one reason this initiative lends momentum to the multilateral negotiations. We have an historic opportunity to contribute to the next generation of international trade rules. So where do we stand today?

Think of the trade agreement as a book. We already have a table of contents listing the topics under negotiation. For some chapters we have a written text taking shape. In others there is text but it is quite preliminary. In others still, there are just ideas waiting to be fleshed out. We have about five months to finish the book.

In October, the book must be finished so that the U.S. Administration can submit the initialled agreement to Congress. And in Canada, depending on the action necessary to implement the agreement, our domestic procedures will have to be followed.

Writing this book is almost like writing by committee. With the elaborate consultative mechanisms we have created, any one who has felt the need to make his views known has had ample opportunity to do so.

We have consulted with the provinces, with business and labour through the ITAC and the 15 SAGITs, with industry associations, arts councils, and women's groups to have a few and those views have been brought to the Cabinet Committee on Trade. It has served as a board of editors and its job is to make the agreement a bestseller.

As you all know, Canadian attention will be focussed on the initiative. And the Canadian media will play a critical role in this process. There will be a need for fair and balanced coverage, a serious appraisal of the critics as well as of the government. I want to point out to you that every credible economic study of this initiative done in both Canada and the United States predicts economic growth, increased jobs and greater wealth for both countries.

I'd also like to point out that some recent headlines have distorted the facts, thereby doing a serious disservice to Canadians. Examples? "Canada after free trade deal may as well raise U.S. flag". "Reagan's hearty backing for free trade masks big problems at bargaining table". "Politicians selling out the country".