

I want tonight to indicate to you ten reasons why the trade agreement, initialled between Canada and the United States makes very good sense for Canada.

First, we have in this country a system of social programs and distinctive national institutions of which we are very proud. But pride isn't the whole question. Those are also expensive institutions. You can't run some of these institutions without an economy that is working. We have to have growth in our economy if we are going to be able to maintain the social programmes and the distinctive institutions that this country wants. And the only way you get growth in a country as exposed to the world as we are, is by having better trade.

Yet, the cloud that is hanging over the future of this country and of others that depend upon trade, is that there has been an evident and vigorous growth of protectionism, everywhere in the world. Certainly you find it in Europe, but most markably recently, in the United States of America and that sector of protectionism was not something theoretical to any Canadian who happened to be in the lumber industry or to any Canadian who happened to be in the steel industry, to any Canadian who happened to be raising hogs, to any Canadian who happened to be in one of a range of questions that had been the subject in fact or in threat of countervail actions or some other actions taken by the United States.

Protectionism, because we are the largest trading partner of the United States, was obviously focussing upon us. And one of the things this trade arrangement means is that despite the odds, despite the strength of protectionism in the United States as they enter an election year, we were able to get an agreement that is important, not only in terms of relations between Canada and the United States, but also in terms of the tide of protectionism internationally.

You will remember that the agreement was signed very close to midnight on a Saturday night, close to the deadline. The Sunday afterwards, I happened to be welcoming to Ottawa the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia. As Prince Saud came down the stairway from his aircraft, what he said to me was, the first thing he said was Thank you. I said, thank you for what? you just got here. And he said thank you for signing that trade agreement. Because we in Saudi Arabia are threatened by American protectionism just as you are. The world is threatened by American protectionism. And if a country like Canada was not able to sign a trade agreement with the United States, then there wouldn't have been much freer reign to those forces of protectionism which threaten the whole of the world.