

What is the incentive and spur to become competitive internationally and to reap the benefits of increased exports, lower priced consumer goods, higher value-added jobs here in Canada, better incomes and more interesting occupations?

The answer to all of these questions lies in obtaining better access to foreign markets by negotiating effective international trade treaties. This has been one of the primary goals of our government since we took power in 1984. This goal guided us during the negotiation of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and throughout our negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This goal will also guide us during the upcoming North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations.

Given the importance of trade to Canada's prosperity, common sense dictates that we must pursue our international trade objectives on all fronts -- bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral.

The FTA, NAFTA and GATT are all designed to secure open markets for Canadian exporters, to make Canada an attractive location for investment, and to establish the basis for a globally competitive Canadian economy.

These three initiatives chart the course that we will continue to follow because we believe free markets are the best way to promote Canadian interests. The other main opposition parties were against the FTA and now they are against free trade with Mexico. The choice is therefore clear.

The opposition parties offer Canadians outdated protectionist policies that would have Canada retreat from the global economy and try to survive by confining ourselves to a domestic market of 26 million people.

The lessons of history are clear. Protectionism produced the Great Depression. That's why we reject the protectionist policies of the opposition. Protectionism has not worked in the past and it will not prepare Canadians for the twenty-first century.

Our government believes in trade liberalization because it has created unprecedented prosperity in Canada for over 40 years. Trade liberalization has a proven track record in Canada.

The choice is not between our three initiatives, because all three are necessary and complementary. The GATT recognizes this because it creates rules to promote an open free trade environment and it specifically provides for free trade agreements. The GATT has endorsed the FTA and the NAFTA because