

However, since there is a good deal of concern over this issue, I am prepared to delete the override clause. Simply deleting the override will have the effect of (a) leaving it to the courts to interpret conflicts between the Free Trade Act and other federal acts according to the normal rules of statutory interpretation, and (b) ensuring that the Agreement itself has no effect on other federal laws, except to the extent that the Free Trade Act and the Acts amended by it refer to the Agreement.

In short, deletion of clause 8 may result in Parliament having to legislate in the future should any inconsistencies be found in other federal legislation that were not discovered in our review to date. However the FTA can now truly be considered just as any other ordinary Act which cannot in any way bind this or any future Parliament.

Other Amendments

Government members will table only these two substantive amendments (and several technical amendments) which I have indicated I will accept. As for any amendments, opposition members may table, we will review these carefully in the context of my statement to the Committee on July 11.

"The Committee has an important function in reviewing the legislation to see whether it accurately implements the free trade agreement. In any case in which the legislation fails to implement the agreement accurately, the government would be open to amendments."