

Or finally, we could try to negotiate a comprehensive trade agreement with the U.S., one which might involve most of the trade passing both ways between us.

In issuing the discussion paper, the government made no prejudgment on which of the four strategies would be the wisest and most appropriate for Canada, and we are not yet far enough along in our consultation process for me to try to predict which one Canadians will choose. I can say one thing, however, and that is that wherever we have gone we have found intense interest in arriving at some sort of agreement that will keep our trade open with the States.

Whichever course we choose, I believe we will find a receptive negotiating table in the U.S. Our American counterparts have told us, and I certainly have no reason to doubt them, that they are as interested as we are in strengthening our trade relationship.

So we are proceeding at what I would call "full speed ahead". Our consultations will continue into early May, after which we will try to digest what we have heard and then discuss our findings with the governments of Canada's ten provinces. By sometime in June, I hope and expect to be able to put forward my recommendations to Cabinet.

Let me make a final observation. We are not just talking in the wind up in Canada. Our Prime Minister, and our government, are absolutely committed to give meaning and substance to the new era in our relations that was evident, in word and deed, in Quebec City. In New York in December, the Prime Minister told the Economic Club that "Canada is open for business." Here in Chicago in April, I can tell you something else. Canada means business.

Thank you.