

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be back in Winnipeg and I welcome this opportunity to discuss the issue of Canada's global competitiveness with you today.

Canada's ability to compete in the global economy is a critical issue for all of us because it will profoundly affect the future prosperity of the entire country.

The purpose of my remarks today is to highlight the important role that Canada's international trade strategy will play in preparing us to compete at home and abroad in the twenty-first century.

Global competition and international trade are important to Canadians because our prosperity depends on them. We export over one quarter of everything we produce and over 3 million Canadian jobs depend on our ability to compete and trade in international markets.

Manitoba is the second most export-oriented province in Canada with total exports valued at more than \$3 billion a year. Manitobans have recognized the importance of international competition and trade for well over a century. In the early days, Manitoba was a major player in the international grain trade. Today, Manitoba has a highly diversified economy and exports goods and services to more than 100 countries.

International trade has been particularly important to Manitoba's manufacturing sector. Sixty per cent of all manufacturing output is exported and the United States is the largest international market. Principal exports to the U.S. include aircraft assemblies and parts, computer technology and auto parts and accessories. Exports to the U.S. total \$1.5 billion.

These statistics illustrate that Manitoba's high standard of living depends on its ability to compete and trade in global markets. So I think we can all agree that Manitoba's future prosperity depends on more international trade, and not less.

Canada's future prosperity depends on our ability to compete abroad. If our goods and services cannot compete around the world, they will eventually be unable to compete here at home. However, Canada cannot compete if we cannot trade.

After all, what good are high-quality competitively priced Canadian products if we are locked out of world markets by export subsidies and import barriers?

And how can any country develop its manufacturing industries if it does not have access to the large markets required to generate cost-efficient production runs, research and development, and capital investment?