

*Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

business, they are always eager to try new ideas. They are entrepreneurs. They are business people.

When given a choice on November 21, the people of Wild Rose voted "Yes" to free trade. They know that ratification of the agreement means they can look forward to a booming economy, to challenge the economic greatness of the United States and to be exceptional in their own fields, whether it is agriculture, tourism, or business. The people of Alberta still have that pioneer spirit, but they do have long memories. They remember that a Liberal Government crippled a booming oil industry with the National Energy Program. They remember the PGRT. They remember the years when the Liberal Government forgot the western farmer.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Feltham:** Albertans know how to avoid a boom or bust economy in the future. It is to diversify. We must stabilize our economy. We must be less dependent on an economy that is cyclical in nature, where world prices for petroleum and agricultural products fluctuate while costs remain high. We must establish stability. We must diversify. To diversify, we need markets for our products. That market is just south of our border. The Free Trade Agreement will open that border to Alberta and we will take advantage of it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Feltham:** The removal of the tariff walls will allow Alberta industries to become important on both the national scene and the international scene. Businessmen know that the Free Trade Agreement will expand opportunities for them to open new markets in the United States. The young people of our country can now look forward to a possible future in business when this agreement is ratified. Would anyone deny that future for our youth? The opposition has said that we cannot compete in the U.S., but we do compete, and we will continue to compete. Those whose primary market is the American market will find that their expansion potential will increase.

Businessmen trying to do business in the United States have had to cope with differing technical standards and a myriad set of requirements for licensing and registration. This has slowed their expansion, but already, because of the Free Trade Agreement, talks have begun to make it an easier operation to expand into the American market.

With expansion potential increased, investors' confidence will make it easier for small businessmen to secure investment funds for modernization and for new ventures.

• (2050)

With expansion potential, increased industrial confidence will make it easier for small businessmen to secure investment funds for modernization and new ventures. Entrepreneurial initiative will take over and Alberta small businessmen will be able to achieve their full potential.

The Alberta agricultural sector will have access to the fastest growing market in the world. Removal of U.S. tariffs on red meats will mean that Alberta beef will be more competitive in the U.S. market. Cattle producers know what is good for them. Support for free trade is strong from Alberta cattlemen. They understand the importance of free trade to their sector of the economy. It is interesting to note that for the past 100 years The Cattlemen's Association has been promoting free trade.

For years people in the agriculture sector have had to put up with a time consuming and costly procedure to protect themselves in trade disputes. A settlement process that will be efficient and fast is what farmers have needed and will now get.

For the first time there will be a process for settling trade disputes and a means to protect our farm exports from annoyances like the countervailing duties that the U.S. throws up to protect their own farm and manufactured products.

Just imagine what the removal of trade barriers will mean to those who want to enter the agri-food industry. They will find that the removal of tariffs on packaging materials, food ingredients and machinery will encourage this sector to expand. The additional jobs that will be created and the additional profits to be made will encourage growth and productivity.

Now let us think about the depressed petroleum industry. Presently there are such high duties on petrochemical by-products that some cannot compete in the U.S. market. An 18 per cent U.S. duty on Canadian methanol and 12.5 per cent on polyethylene make it difficult to compete and to give impetus to expand our present capacity and to process our raw products in Canada, and to increase the profitability of existing exports. The U.S. market will be opened to a whole range of oil derived products made in Alberta.