

wish a better life for the Mexican worker. Those concerns were not treated lightly by President Salinas when he recently visited this country. He sees the deficiencies. He wants to make improvements, and he has made many already. But he made one compelling point. And that was that the road to higher wages and a cleaner environment lies through greater prosperity. And that prosperity is dependent upon the opportunity provided by trade. Are we to deny him that prosperity by denying him free trade?

A new trading environment requires industry and workers to adapt to new conditions. The Canadian economy has an excellent track record in responding to those changes.

We are not newcomers to the realities and pressures of international trade. For years now, through progressive reductions in tariffs and trade barriers, Canadian companies and the labour force have not only rolled with the punches, but have continued to do well in a tough and competitive marketplace. Where needed, the Government has provided programs to help industry and workers make the necessary changes.

We do not anticipate that a trilateral free trade agreement will put any strain on the economy. About 80 per cent of our trade with Mexico is already tariff-free. Furthermore, where tariffs exist, a phased reduction will cushion industries from disruptions.

Programs will continue to be available to help Canadian industry become more globally competitive. The Canadian Jobs Strategy helps in the development of our labour market through job creation, adjustment, mobility and retraining. Industry, Science and Technology Canada has a broad range of programs, ranging from sector competitiveness initiatives to small business loans. External Affairs and International Trade Canada has also mounted a wide range of initiatives, some global, some tailored to the challenges and opportunities of particular regions.

All of the major programs have been reviewed and, where appropriate, modified to improve their effectiveness and increase their flexibility. In total there are 400 programs of adjustment available from all levels of government in Canada. And those have recently been supplemented through reform of the unemployment insurance system, yielding an \$800-million Labour Force Development Strategy.

I would emphasize that these programs are not designed to create an industrial welfare system. They are aimed at preparing industry and workers to be able to rely on themselves.

One final point. I can assure you that, as we did with the FTA, and as we are doing now with the MTN, we will involve all sectors of business from every region of this country, providing them