

Let me make one thing clear. The U.S. Administration is not, as has been suggested in recent press reports, simply responding to Canadian proposals and ideas. The USTR has already canvassed the opinions of a wide range of U.S. industries. They are seeking industry views on interests to be pursued in their sectors. The U.S. side has advanced its own ideas on what sectors might be included in the joint work program.

We both understand that the activity needs careful management and study. Clearly, neither side wants to raise unrealizable expectations or unnecessary concerns.

It is therefore a joint effort in every sense with a joint work program, looking to possible arrangements which will be mutually advantageous.

The process is still at an early stage. Neither side has a mandate to negotiate as yet but we are doing the analyses and beginning consultations which will in time provide each government with a sound basis for decision. I see this as neither dangerous nor irresponsible; it is realistic.