

As you can see, Access North America is a bread and butter program. It will be a tool for companies who will see the great potential that the NAFTA creates in Mexico, but who will need some assistance in the basics of this new market.

Canadian businesses have already begun to increase their presence in the Mexican market. One need only point to the 4,500 business people who last year visited the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City, more than twice the number for the previous year.

I invite you to talk to my trade officials and let them show you how you, too, can make Mexico a key part of your marketing activities.

As you know, Canada has already introduced its legislation to implement the NAFTA, and we are confident that it will come into force, after its ratification in the United States and Mexico, on January 1, 1994. Meanwhile, we are participating in the trilateral talks aimed at producing additional agreements on the environment and labour, but agree absolutely with our partners that there is no question of renegotiating the NAFTA.

The NAFTA provides new safeguards that are important to the people of Ontario. For instance, during negotiations, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico made a strong commitment to environmentally sustainable development. As a result, the NAFTA contains more environmental provisions than any other trade agreement, and it forbids countries from lowering their environmental standards to attract investment.

Canada is committed to these parallel agreements, which are designed to strengthen environmental co-operation among our three countries and to open dialogue about the workplace in the liberalized North American market.

The work has already begun on these side agreements. We must, however, be careful when it comes to the question of enforcement of any environmental standard or labour issue that we might agree upon. After all, we are three sovereign countries and we must respect each other's sovereignty.

I am confident that we can find some common ground whereby we can all agree on greater environmental and labour co-operation and at the same time try to improve enforcement.

Among Canada's objectives in these ongoing trilateral talks is a North American Commission for the Environment (NACE). One of its functions would be to co-operate with the Free Trade Commission to achieve the environmental goals of the NAFTA.

The momentum toward more environmental awareness will help foster a climate that will be receptive to new environmental