

Mr. Speaker, it is a rare privilege to have the opportunity to introduce a motion in the House which has the potential to enhance profoundly the future of our country, and that is my privilege today.

The trade debate is about Canada's future. It is about jobs--20th century jobs and 21st century jobs. It is about economic growth for those regions of Canada which are not sharing in the wealth that our present economic system provides. It is about sovereignty, because only an economically strong country can provide our unique social programs and preserve our cultural policies which protect our national identity. However, most of all, the great debate is about security and enhancing our access to our largest market and our biggest customer, the United States, in a long-term binding treaty.

This concept frightens some Canadians. It scares the opposition Parties which have no vision for Canada and offer no hope for Canadians who are unemployed now or who fear that they will be unemployed in the future as technology changes the nature of their jobs. Scare tactics are a cop-out. They are a way of browbeating Canadians back into the 19th century.

Our Government is prepared to lead Canadians through the final decade of the 20th century, turbulent with change, and into the 21st century, only 13 years away. As the Prime Minister has said, we choose to negotiate not because it is easy and not because it is without political risk but because it is in our national interest. We serve that national interest, he reminds us, by securing an agreement with our largest trading partner which will provide stability and security for traders, investors, workers and for our future. Let me tell the House why this is so.

From the earliest days of mankind, from the era of barter systems through to the development of the first great trade routes, trade has been the generator of growth. Cities sprang up where traders met to exchange goods and all the world's great cities have their origins in trade. History is dominated by trade wars and their impact on the development and decline of regions. Trade has determined the future of nations and trade will determine the future of Canada.