

And what about our truckers? Advance Cartage, to take one example, is heavily involved in the transportation of lumber. Just the threat of trade barriers has already cut into their business, and two people have had to be laid off. If the barriers went up, how many others would follow?

Algoma Central Railway would also be hard hit. Most of the ACR's major customers would be affected by trade barriers in the U.S. The railroad employs 500 people, and it figures that 117 of those jobs are directly dependent on trade with the U.S.

The biggest loser, however, would be our largest employer, Algoma Steel. Over the past five years, one-quarter of Algoma's sales have been to the U.S. market. This represents 2,000 jobs in the Sault itself and 150 more in Wawa. Moreover, all of Algoma's recent investment, including the Number Two Seamless Tube Mill, has been based on the premise that they would continue to have unrestricted access to the U.S. As most of us here are aware, however, that access has been under almost constant threat for the past year. The American steel industry is ageing, becoming less competitive. It is demanding more and more protection from foreign steel.

Let me repeat. Access to American markets is critical to Algoma's success.

The principal concern of your Government in exploring trade talks with the United States, therefore, is really quite simple. We can't afford to lose the business, and the arrangements we've got now are just not good enough to keep it. We need something better, just to preserve Canadian jobs.

But that is not all. A better, fairer, more open trade arrangement with the United States would create new jobs, and better jobs. It would encourage new investment, not only foreign investment but investment by Canadians as well, and that would build our industries and make them more competitive throughout the world. We would, in other words, be selling more products not only to the United States but throughout the world. Because we would be more competitive.

Let me stress that the fundamental objective of any negotiations would be an agreement that improves the well-being of all Canadians. We will not conclude a deal which fails to meet this fundamental test.

Neither will we conclude an agreement which diminishes Canadian sovereignty. Our sovereignty is not