

present time than the serious damage to Canadian wheat farmers caused by disputes between the United States and the European community.

But I can tell you that fighting the protectionist tide in Canada at this time is also not easy. And in my country, the opponents of freer trade with the United States are fighting the war on emotional grounds - not economic. They are raising unwarranted fears that a trade treaty with the United States will lead inevitably to an erosion of Canadian culture and to the loss of Canada's political sovereignty.

However, our historical experience has shown that trade expansion has been the source of our economic strength. And it is that economic strength which has allowed Canada to develop the policies and institutions which define us as Canadians today -- the very institutions which our opponents say are threatened by a trade agreement could be better protected by the economic growth that such an agreement can foster.

Today, I've described the trade challenge facing both countries - it is a difficult one. But we believe it is our responsibility to meet the challenge. We believe the evidence shows that existing trade rules between our two countries must be improved if both of us are to avoid mutually destructive actions. And neither Canada nor the United States can improve these rules if we choose to ignore modern realities and stick our heads in the sand.

We choose to negotiate - not because it is easy; but because it is in the national interest of both our countries.

It is time for us to practice the principles of free trade that we preach. This historic initiative deserves our mutual support.