

La Presse Nov. 22/84

The move toward free trade with the U.S. was one that Canada should be prepared to take even though there were risks. Canada needed a larger guaranteed market if it were to match other industrialized nations. (by Frederic Wagniere)

Globe and Mail Nov. 28/84

The Globe reviewed the attitude of various groups toward the idea of a free trade treaty with the U.S. and found that most were supportive--including the Economic Council and a Senate committee. But the Globe said that with a decision on free trade in the offing, Canadians should bear certain points in mind. Would free trade work to the economic advantage of Canada? Would it injure our relations with other important trading partners such as Japan? Could Canada preserve its political independence in free trade with a disproportionately large U.S. partner? "Canadians should remember: once done, there would be no way back."

Financial Post Dec. 1/84

The Post reminded readers that Finance Minister Michael Wilson had described Canada as the only major industrial country without unimpeded access to a market large enough to permit economies of size. The paper suggested Canada should move to gain that access to the U.S. market while there still are barriers in that country to imports from low cost countries.

Montreal Gazette Dec. 3/84

The Gazette again tilted toward free trade once ramifications have been examined.

Montreal Gazette Dec. 4/84

The Gazette said that although sectoral free trade might seem like the appropriate answer to Canada's economic problems, there were hurdles enroute. One problem was that sectoral free trade could well violate international trade rules. A separate impediment, the paper noted, was the assumption by Canadian officials that a separate deal would be struck for each sector--with no tradeoffs between sectors. Hence sectoral free trade in the Gazette's eyes did not appear to be a viable option.

Montreal Gazette Dec. 4/84

The Gazette in a further editorial reviewed the advantages of a free trade arrangement and said it might well be in the interests of most Canadians--"especially if the impact on those likely to bear the brunt of adjustment costs were softened by a suitable transition agreement."

Montreal Gazette Dec. 6/84

In the context of free trade, The Gazette said what was at stake was the preservation of Canada's sovereignty. The prospect of forging closer economic links with the U.S. had always been a sensitive political issue. The Gazette expressed doubts about the value of the free trade arrangement in the long run. It would put pressure on Ottawa and the provincial governments to make Canada more attractive to business. Standards would be lowered and social welfare programs affected.