

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to be in Mount Pearl today to speak to you about Free Trade, an issue of importance for this city, for this province and for the country.

The Free Trade Agreement runs to more than 300 pages of carefully-worded legal text. It is a complex document. It has to be complex because it addresses comprehensively the largest trading relationship in the world, that between Canada and the U.S.

The government has sought to present this Agreement to Canadians in a factual way. That presentation is supported by the independent analysis of groups like the Economic Council of Canada, the C.D. Howe Institute, the Canada West Foundation and the Economic Council of Newfoundland.

That presentation is also supported by independent views of representatives of Canadian exporters and of all the major sectors of the Canadian economy, including manufacturing, the fishery, forest products, mining, energy producers, service industries and many agricultural groups. It is also supported by eight Premiers, including two who lead Liberal governments.

These independent assessments and endorsements of Free Trade are not in themselves arguments for the Agreement. But they are important in helping Canadians decide whose explanation of the Agreement is credible. In considering what this Agreement will mean for you and your families, for our province and for the future of the country, I would ask you to bear this in mind. Why is it that the Opposition see such dire consequences from Free Trade, while all these others do not?

Let me give you some facts why Free Trade will be good for Newfoundland and good for Canada. Here are ten reasons to support Free Trade:

- (1) Under the Free Trade Agreement, Canada will enjoy more favourable access to the U.S. market than any other nation. Opponents of Free Trade say we are angling in a stagnant pool, the economic heyday of the U.S. is past. Why then is Japan eager to open discussions with the U.S. on a Free Trade? Simply because the U.S. is the world's richest market, a market where favoured access is of great value to a trading nation. Canada is a great trading nation and the U.S. is our major export market.