

Canadians do not fear the future. They are leaders, and they make the future work for them and they profit from it.

The creation of a North American free trade area is one of the future's opportunities. It will contribute positively to our greater competitiveness and our prosperity.

It provides us with a larger market allowing us to take advantage of both economies of scale and market specialization. In doing so, it better equips Canadian industry and workers to tackle other world markets with increasing success.

This applies not only to the larger Latin American market to which Mexico offers an obvious opening. It applies also to the countries of Asia-Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.

Developing the skills and adapting to the demands of the North American free trade area will clearly assist us in other world markets.

Eight and a half years ago, this Government set itself the task of looking to the future and outward to the world.

The opposition may wish that Canadians hunker down in the claustrophobic shadow of the way things once were. That is not the fate this Government wishes for this great nation.

We want to fulfil Canada's vocation as a world leader, committed to a stable international economy, to environmentally sustainable growth, to developing new markets and finding new economic partners. When we pursue this progressive agenda, we inevitably create high-quality jobs for Canadians and strengthen the foundations of our prosperity.

The North American Free Trade Agreement is proof, and a solid demonstration, of that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I travel a lot on trade missions. I meet many exporters from other countries, and I ask them: "What country in the world would you like to have assured access to? What is your most important market? What country would you like to have a dispute settlement mechanism with?"

In all cases, the answer is "the United States." We have that, Mr. Speaker. We have something that others would give their eye-teeth for, and now we are broadening the relationship to include Mexico. We are very fortunate people in Canada to have this. Let us not squander that success. Let us support the NAFTA.