

Clearly, the critics were wrong, both in their economic fears and their cultural fears.

The fact is, the FTA has made Canada stronger -- more able to compete and prosper and more able to hang on to the social safety nets that we all consider to be one of the finest aspects of Canadian life.

In the past few weeks, two U.S. trade actions have prompted a reprise of the critics' chorus of complaints against the FTA.

Now trade disputes are never pleasant, but at least with the FTA we have a mechanism for resolving them expeditiously and fairly.

Instead of having to rely completely on the politically vulnerable, unilateral process of pre-FTA, we will have a rule-based bilateral system that offers some predictability and stability.

Our critics and we complained quite rightly about last week's extraordinary challenge on live swine; our critics, however, conveniently forget to mention the millions of dollars that were returned to Canadian pork producers when a similar dispute was resolved in our favour under the FTA two years ago. Nor should we forget that, as costly and annoying as these disputes can be, over 95 per cent of our trade with the United States is carried on dispute-free.

The dispute resolution process has indeed served Canada well, and it is a process that will be maintained and strengthened under the proposed NAFTA.

More broadly, under NAFTA we will:

- gain better access to the Mexican market of 85 million people;
- preserve and improve the original Free Trade Agreement with the United States; and
- ensure that Canada remains an attractive location for investment in North America.

When the NAFTA goes into effect on January 1, 1994, we will be part of the largest and richest free trade area in the world: 360 million people with a combined wealth of \$7 trillion.

Let me expand on some of the key elements that make the NAFTA a good deal for Canada:

- Most of Mexico's tariffs and non-tariff barriers will be eliminated within 10 years. Not bad, when you remember the Mexico of 10 years ago; it had one of the most restrictive