

I VIEW THE PROMOTION OF CANADIAN EXPORTS AS BEING A KEY ELEMENT OF MY PORTFOLIO. ESSENTIAL AS IT MAY BE, IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO NEGOTIATE CHANGES IN THE RULES GOVERNING TRADE. WE MUST CONTINUE TO SEEK NEW MARKETS FOR OUR GOODS AND SERVICES.

AS WAS STATED IN THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE, PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED UPON TRADE WITH JAPAN AND OTHER PACIFIC RIM COUNTRIES. I WILL BE ADDRESSING THIS THEME AGAIN IN THE COMING MONTHS.

SO, MR. SPEAKER, WE KNOW PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE DOING. WE ARE WELL-PREPARED; AND WE ARE CONVINCED THAT OUR STRATEGY IS THE BEST WAY TO ADVANCE OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS. WE ARE ACTIVELY CONSULTING WITH THE PROVINCES. INDEED, OUR RESPONSE TO THE SOFTWOOD LUMBER CASE IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL COOPERATION IN TRADE.

WE ALSO HAVE THE ADVICE OF A WIDE ARRAY OF PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERTS. AND AS PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY HAS CONSISTENTLY SAID, IF OUR NEGOTIATIONS DO NOT RESULT IN A BETTER DEAL FOR CANADA - THERE WILL BE NO DEAL.

BUT WE BELIEVE IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TRY. WE BELIEVE THAT TRADE PROBLEMS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS IN SUCH SECTORS AS LUMBER, FISH, PORK AND STEEL PROVE THAT EXISTING TRADE RULES MUST BE IMPROVED. AND WE CANNOT IMPROVE THE SITUATION IF WE TURN AND WALK AWAY.

WE HAVE THE CHOICE OF NEGOTIATING TO ADVANCE OUR INTERESTS, OR WE CAN RUN AWAY AND LET OTHERS UNILATERALLY SET THE RULES FOR US.

WE CHOOSE TO NEGOTIATE - NOT BECAUSE IT IS POPULAR; NOT BECAUSE IT IS EASY; BUT BECAUSE IT IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF CANADA.