

United States. They are of some importance to us, and we are of some importance to them. For example, British Columbia buys more US goods than China does.

More than three-quarters of our total annual exports go to the US markets. Obviously, we are extremely vulnerable to any protective trade actions taken by the United States, whether those actions are aimed at others, or at us.

Our general access to the American market is threatened with more erosion every day. There are over 300 protectionist bills in the Congress today. They either threaten or have already harmed \$6 billion in Canadian exports, and 140 000 jobs, affecting all regions of the country and a wide range of commodities.

That is the threat from Congress. In addition, various states dream up other ways to stop our trade. This summer, for example, four western states slapped a prohibition on our pork, claiming they didn't like the antibiotics our pigs were being fed.

Even when we are successful in beating back protectionist measures, we get only temporary relief. Today's victory results in tomorrow's attempts in Congress to change the legislation to catch us next time. That leaves a constant cloud over our exports, and naturally drives away some investment in these industries.

As we know too well, one of the most serious threats now is to the lumber industry. Americans buy more than half of all we produce, and 60 000 Canadian jobs are at stake. Three years ago, an attempt in Congress to impose new duties on Canadian lumber was defeated. There are now three new bills before Congress that would restrict our sales of softwood lumber.

Other exports under threat include sugar; and steel; and fish, and salt; and raspberries; and blueberries; and other products. There is even talk in the United States of imposing surcharges on all imports, and that would be a severe blow to our economy. It has been estimated that a 10 per cent reduction in our exports alone could throw a quarter of a million Canadians out of work.

So we have a threat we cannot ignore. Canada cannot afford to lose jobs, nor to have them continue under constant threat. The arrangements we have now are not good enough. We need a better mechanism for settling trade disputes and irritants; for reaching agreement on controversies over subsidies for industry, agriculture and fisheries. In brief, we need something better just to preserve Canadian jobs.

That speaks of some of the obstacles we want to discuss with the Americans, in the interest of Canadian jobs and security. But let's also look at the opportunities.

A better, fairer, more open trade arrangement with the United States would create new jobs, and better jobs. It would encourage new investment, not only foreign investment, but investment by Canadians as well, and that would build our industries, and make them more competitive throughout the world. We would, in other words, be selling more products not only to the United States, but to the rest of the world as well. Because we would be more competitive.
