

I should mention, also, at this point that, of course, most of the emphasis quite naturally tends to fall upon tariff reductions or changes. But for Canada, as for many other countries, an equally important, if not more important, aspect of the MTN is the whole question of non-tariff barriers. This, too, is being addressed in what I think Honourable Members will find is a comprehensive and far-sighted way. No one has any illusions that this process will be either easy or quick. It will take a very long time, and indeed it is quite possible that we may not proceed with a single action but may provide for periodic assessment along the way. In other words, no one in Canada, either from the optimistic or the pessimistic side, should expect or anticipate that there will be some dramatic overnight change in the present scheme of things. Obviously, this question has to be approached with great caution and great care.

In addition to that, of course, we in this country must also examine what we can do domestically in those cases where transitional or other forms of adjustment-assistance are required to ease any potential burdens that may emerge when the final listings are made and the exercise is over. But I repeat that I believe we are embarked, as a country, on the wise course.

After all, it has become something of a cliché in Canada to say that we must export in order to survive. It follows almost automatically that a climate receptive to export or, for that matter, a climate receptive to imports from around the world, is highly advantageous for Canada, particularly in view of the quite dramatic changes that have been taking place in the last ten to 20 years, which have seen very large organizations of countries coming together. I refer to organizations of countries such as the European Economic Community (EEC), the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) group, and many others. This means that Canada, with 23 million people and a comparatively small manufacturing and production base, must look outward and must avoid at all costs an international community that is inward-looking, if we are going to have those export opportunities.

There is a great deal more that could be said and will need to be said, and a great deal more consultation will have to take place with provincial governments, with various industrial sectors and, indeed, with the Canadian community at large, before final and definitive decisions are taken with regard to MTN. But I thought it important, in the context of this debate, to emphasize to Honourable Members that Canada is taking a very strong role and considers it important for the country that we have as one of the central pieces of our foreign policy this total involvement, to the maximum extent possible, in various international organizations, which, in the last analysis, will have a tremendous, if not decisive, effect upon how quickly we emerge from the current depressing and unfortunate circumstances in which not only we, but all the industrialized countries, find ourselves.

In this connection...it is parenthetically interesting to note that, while one can never be sure until these events are concluded, there is considerable encouragement in the news coming from Venezuela, where the OPEC countries are presently meeting, which seems to suggest that we are likely to see a freeze on oil prices at least for the next year or so.