

markets, necessary to protecting Canada's access to the continental market.²³

If regional trade agreements were no longer part of the terrain of the politicized (if highly political), the pursuit of regional or bilateral trade agreements became one of the strategies of the Canadian state within the context of globalization. As such, the Liberal government's newly-embraced free trade commitment was broadened to include not only the United States and Mexico, but virtually anyone who would listen. Trade diversification became one of the technical solutions to the exigencies of globalization, where possible, within the context of negotiated free trade agreements. These agreements have taken the form of the negotiation of NAFTA-like provisions with Chile, without the United States,²⁴ as well as the expressed desire eventually to extend NAFTA "rules for free trade throughout the Western Hemisphere and even beyond."²⁵ The Chrétien government's endorsement of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), announced at the December 1994 Americas Miami Summit, reflects another element of the commitment to freer trade. The FTAA, expected to be launched in 1998, is a process parallel to, and complimentary with, NAFTA and other regional free trade agreements throughout North and South America. Equally, the Liberal government has participated enthusiastically in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, actively promoting the initiative of Pacific Rim Free Trade by 2015. Free trade between North America and the European Union has been a favourite theme of Prime Minister Chrétien's, a plan derailed for a time by lukewarm support from Washington, and a "fish war" with Spain.²⁶ Free trade with Israel came into effect on January 1, 1997, in part following upon an earlier deal negotiated between Israel and the United States,²⁷ and free trade between Canada and the Palestinian Authority appeared a possibility by the summer of 1997.²⁸

In contrast to the free trade election of 1988, however, political debate, and often, news coverage, is noticeably absent. It is as though the FTA fight having been