

I am delighted to be here tonight to discuss how we Canadians can meet the challenge of changing markets in the 1990's.

I said we Canadians. I should have said we **new** Canadians. Because many people forget that I too am a naturalized Canadian. Like many of you here tonight, I was not born in this country, only becoming a Canadian when Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949. I bet I have also taken more ribbing about my accent than all of you here put together. So I think we older Newfoundlanders have earned our spot in the Canadian cultural mosaic.

Today's program has focused on multiculturalism, small business and trade - as Canadian a conference as there ever could be. It was the product of a 1986 initiative, "Multiculturalism means Business". Well, I am here to tell you that the Department of External Affairs and International Trade also means business. That's why we have officially added International Trade to our corporate name - to explicitly recognize the importance of international trade in our foreign relations; and to make sure that small and large exporters in Canada recognize that **we are your focal point in Ottawa. We exist to serve your needs.**

I know the cynics out there may laugh when you hear a politician talking about supporting the efforts of the private sector. On a day-to-day basis, governments can sometimes look like part of the problem - not part of the solution.

So tonight, I want to explain our strategy to help you meet the challenge of change. I want to give you some food for thought, so you can judge for yourself whether or not there may just be method in our madness after all.

Our strategy for Canada starts from the premise that the world is not only changing - it has already fundamentally changed.

Scientific advance has tipped the scales of success from natural resources and brawn to human resources and brains.