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Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Min. des Affaires étrangères

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Overview

Canadian Access to Export Markets

Background

Since its election in 1984, the Canadian Government has consistently focussed on Canada's international trading relations, especially trade relations with the United States, as a primary element of the nation's economic renewal. This was reflected in the major policy document "A New Direction for Canada: An Agenda for Economic Renewal" issued by Finance Minister Michael Wilson in November 1984.

In order to channel discussion of this subject and to provide an effective basis for consultations within Canada on international trade, Minister for International Trade James F. Kelleher issued a Discussion Paper in January 1985 entitled "How to Secure and Enhance Canadian Access to Export Markets". Mr. Kelleher then undertook a cross-Canada consultative tour, visiting 15 cities and meeting with hundreds of interested Canadians. Concurrently, he held several meetings with his provincial government counterparts, as well as with spokesmen for major interest groups, including commercial and industrial trade associations and labour organizations.

The future of Canada-United States trade relationships was a major topic of the Green Paper "Competitiveness and Security: Directions for Canada's International Relations", issued in May 1985 by the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs. Following Mr. Clark's tabling of the Green Paper in the House of Commons, the government and the parliamentary opposition agreed to the establishment of a Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate to examine the wide range of guidelines bearing on Canada's international relations. The committee was requested to make a final report by May 31, 1986, but an interim report was



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