

*The Address—Mrs. Collins*

provinces to remove interprovincial barriers to trade. The negotiation of a new trade agreement with the United States would ensure access of Canadian goods and services to our largest market. This is vital to Canada and particularly to British Columbia. Only with such an agreement in place can we hope to avoid the protectionist intrusions which we now face as exemplified by the softwood lumber issue.

At the same time I am pleased to see the Government is committed to supporting the new multilateral trade negotiations under the auspices of GATT and will, as well, focus on expanding our trade in the Pacific Rim. As I know from my own experience and involvement in that region, there are many opportunities awaiting us in the export of everything from our resources to our special skills in engineering and municipal infrastructure, health care and education services. Joint ventures, special licensing agreements and trading companies must be established if we wish to compete in the growing markets of Japan and Korea, China and the ASEAN countries. The public and private sectors need to work effectively together to pursue aggressively and take advantage of these opportunities.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, time does not allow me to detail all our accomplishments and our future plans with respect to the other three aspects of our agenda. Let me just say that national reconciliation is happening. I have talked to politicians and senior government officials in various parts of the country who have confirmed that the attitude and atmosphere of federal-provincial relations have changed dramatically in just two years from confrontation to co-operation. That is not to say that we all necessarily agree with one another, but at least now there are regular consultations and forums, including the annual First Ministers' Conference which will be held next in Vancouver this November.

I know that some of our Ministers are in touch regularly with their provincial counterparts as we try to work together as a team to unite this country and make it work.

We can be rightly proud of our role on the international front, and particularly proud of the reputation the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) have established in their visits abroad and to international organizations. Many Members of Parliament have had the opportunity of taking part in these visits and are aware of the high regard Canada is held in the international sphere. Perhaps the most recent example is our participation in the GATT meetings in Uruguay two weeks ago where many other countries' delegations acknowledged the outstanding contribution of the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Canadian delegation in helping to move the multilateral trade negotiations forward. Our role in supporting the Commonwealth and La Francophonie gives us a tremendous opportunity to have a positive influence with many nations around the world as we work toward the elimination of terrorism, reduction in nuclear arms and the pursuit of peace.

Finally, I would like to touch on some of the highlights of our accomplishments and initiatives in the field of social

justice. Fairness and equity must be the hallmark of any social justice system. Over the past two years I have personally enjoyed working on the legislative initiatives undertaken by this Government on employment equity; amendments to the Criminal Code to deal harshly with drinking and driving; a new and more humane Divorce Act; proposals to deal with child sexual abuse and pornography and actions to assist in finding missing children. These measures have been heartily welcomed across the land and particularly by women who see them as part of the measures needed to achieve equality and justice and eliminate the vestiges of discrimination which still linger in some corners of our country.

An issue which has always been of concern to me as a politician, but particularly as a parent, is the kind of future we are creating for our children. Family life is changing in our society. These changes in many cases create additional stress for parents and children alike. I am pleased to see that the Throne Speech recognizes these changes and we will develop policies and programs to meet the needs of the evolving and varied nature of the Canadian family.

I have always believed that as a society we must emphasize to our young people the importance of accepting responsibility for themselves and their lives as well as to others and their country. I believe we need to send clear messages to young Canadians about their responsibilities but, as well, alert them to the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse and the havoc they can create both for themselves and for their families.

The federal Government must be a partner in the development of opportunities for young Canadians to help them meet the challenge of the future.

Although we do not know the exact nature of our future, I think we do know that in the future the pace of change will continue to accelerate, technological advances will dramatically affect the way in which we conduct our lives and the information explosion will reveal to us new frontiers. We as Canadians must be ready to face the challenges of that future society and we must prepare our children by giving them the skills, the confidence and the spirit to survive and to stand tall in their communities and the world.

Our achievements of the past two years, our plans as set forward in the Throne Speech for the next two years all support that common goal I referred to earlier: Canada as a modern, tolerant, caring nation whose citizens are secure and prosperous. We as politicians and we as a Government must have the wisdom and the understanding of the people of Canada to lead us toward that goal.

● (1130)

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Girard), that the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada: