

emphasis that the Minister and the government are putting on our international marketing and trade development efforts. This comes in time for the 100th anniversary of the Trade Commissioner Service. It is not a return to the old days. It is more an indication of the revitalization of our total trade agenda.

10.Q. Why has management of the competitiveness issue been situated in the Economic Policy Branch?

A. The new prosperity agenda of the government is a key element in support of national unity and is based on building a strong economy. Canada, which exports approximately thirty percent of its production, is dependent on being able to compete effectively in a complex international market. Many of the policy functions that are important to the development of a strong national and global economy are already being performed in the Economic Policy Branch. Competitiveness is a natural adjunct to this work.

11.Q. How will these reductions in EX positions and the TEC affect future promotion into and within the senior executive group?

A. Having annual promotions continues to be our objective. However, it is too early to say whether there will be any at the EX level next year. We have to carefully examine the effects of the EX reduction as well as the impact of implementing the Corporate Review decisions to destream the EXs and create an extended professional stream.

12.Q. What will happen to bifurcation?

A. We remain committed to achieving bifurcation. However, fewer EX positions in the system and a much lower number of authorized EXs will mean a smaller professional group paralleling the EX levels. Another factor is that Treasury Board has recently changed the definition of EX and is proposing two kinds of EXs, managerial and professional. This has to be looked at.

13.Q. Have the conversions been made in an equitable fashion?

A. We have tried to be equitable and fair. But our principal objective was to base our decisions on priorities and strategic considerations for the future. As it turned out, because the priority shifts affected nearly everybody, the impact of the decisions is generally well distributed. An attached chart shows the effect by stream and another by Branch. In addition, the HQ/Abroad split in conversions is about 45%/55%, somewhat lower than the current distribution but in line with our goal to preserve positions abroad in relation to positions at headquarters.