

To meet the challenges of growing international markets, Canadian firms must be competitive. Unfortunately, there are many areas where we are not. Since 1961, our deficit in services trade has risen to \$12.6 billion from \$457 million.

It's not that we can't compete. If you think Canadian service companies can't be world beaters, talk to Mike Miller. He's the President of Safety Boss Ltd. of Calgary -- a company which may be in the next edition of the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Safety Boss was one of the first four companies Kuwait hired in March to put out the 650 oil well fires left burning in the country after the Gulf War. The company capped 178 fires, more than any of the other companies -- among them some of the legends of oil well fire fighting.

We can compete in international markets. And we do -- often by entering into partnerships. That's what InfoCorp Computer Solutions Ltd. of Winnipeg has done. InfoCorp produces PC-based point-of-sale software for retailers. Earlier this year, InfoCorp signed a marketing deal with ICL/Fujitsu under which ICL/Fujitsu will become the exclusive distributor of InfoCorp's software in the Asian market.

Too few Canadians are aware of the hard reality that the world economy is changing, that we cannot continue to rely on our natural resources to maintain and improve our standard of living and that it is crucial to change the way we work and compete.

That is why we are inviting Canadians to work together to develop a plan to create a globally competitive Canadian economy.

Today, I want to emphasize a particularly vital element of competitiveness. I want to include in any discussion of competitiveness the word, the concept and the practice of partnership.

Some may be surprised at linking competitiveness with partnership.

Some see competitiveness as dog-eat-dog conflict. While such conflict is inevitable in a dynamic market economy, this does not mean that unremitting confrontation is a good strategy for success. I want Canadians to look at another strategy, namely, partnerships.

Individual drive and entrepreneurship are key elements in competitiveness. They always have been. They always will be.

But they are not the only elements. Competitiveness does not mean every one is on his or her own. Competitiveness is also