

THRONE SPEECH

(The following is the foreign affairs portion of the Speech from the Throne delivered in the Canadian Parliament on April 3, 1989. It is presented here as an editorial service of International Perspectives.)

My government believes these objectives to be fundamental:

First, to build a strong economy, encouraged by incentive and opportunity, an economy fully competitive among the world's trading nations and one in which all Canadians may share its challenges, risks and rewards;

Second, to preserve Canada's environment, to actively encourage increased public interest and involvement, and to give firm leadership and support to international efforts to overcome the environmental threat to our planet.

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Preparing Canada's Future

My government is continuing the process of implementing the Free Trade Agreement with Canada's principal trading partner, the United States. Multilateral trade negotiations through the Uruguay round of GATT are also a high priority....

Outward-looking trade policies will be necessary for Canada if it is to be competitive in the world. Many industrialized countries — notably in Western Europe — are forming larger trading alliances so that their industries may benefit from access to larger markets. Business firms are creating world-scale plants as a means of realizing the opportunities which flow from liberalized trade.

With the development of cost-efficient manufacturing in the newly industrialized countries of Asia — and more competitive resource development in the Third World — major new factors are emerging in the international market place. No nation can remain indifferent to, or aloof from, these economic realities....

My government is providing programs to assist small and medium-sized business to develop export opportunities that are emerging as a result of the Free Trade Agreement. The federal government is also placing greater emphasis on the Asia/Pacific region as well as on Europe.

My government's purpose is to ensure that the benefits of liberalized trade and economic expansion are shared fairly by all Canadians.

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The Environmental Imperative

The world itself is facing an environmental challenge of unprecedented magnitude. Recognizing this, my government has strongly supported the Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development and its call for "sustainable development" — which holds that the state of the world's environment, the strength of the global economy and the health of the earth's inhabitants are inextricably linked.

My government will participate in the establishment of a centre for the international promotion of sustainable development, to be located in Winnipeg....

These initiatives are part of a new environmental agenda which will also include the commitment to: ...improve the quality of the atmosphere through the negotiation of an acid rain accord with the United States, the implementation of the Ozone Protocol signed in Montreal in 1987, and the pursuit of further international efforts to control toxic emissions and to stimulate the evolution of international institutions in environmental matters.

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Canada's International Role

Canadians are, by vocation, world citizens. They helped form the United Nations, and are among its most creative and consistent supporters. Forty years ago this week, Canada played a pivotal role in the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Canada retains that active commitment to freedom and to Europe. Canada is active in the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the Economic Summit, GATT, and in other initiatives to improve the standards and security of the international community.

Canadians prize freedom and tolerance at home, and pursue those values in the world.

My government will continue to take a strong stand in defence of human rights. It will continue to be among the leaders in peacekeeping, in international development, in strengthening international organizations, and in relieving the devastation of famine or of natural disaster. It will apply firmly and fairly the new legislation on refugees, and will expand overall immigration levels.

We are a northern nation, proud of our arctic frontier, and determined to work with our northern allies and neighbours to develop a new co-operative ethic in the Arctic.

Canada is the immediate neighbour of both superpowers, and my government will apply Canada's influence to increase understanding and co-operation between East and West. The government will continue its support of progress toward the reduction and control of arms, and will continue to help resolve regional disputes.

Modern economics, social and environmental realities draw the world together dramatically. In these new circumstances, Canada has special contributions to make, and legitimate interests to advance and defend.

Canada's efficient agricultural producers cannot compete fairly in a world in which trade-distorting subsidies wreak havoc with market disciplines, while bringing undue pressure to bear on the nation's treasury.

Canadians who fish for a living find their catches reduced by predatory over-fishing outside the 200-mile limit, where Canadian regulations cannot be enforced. My government will intensify its international efforts to put an end to these practices.