

But this battle was replaced by another one - this time with the European Community. The European Community also attempted to label furs caught in leg-hold traps. The Government of Canada won that battle as well by agreeing to implement more humane trapping standards and methods by 1996.

But this was a temporary victory. There is a deadline in place. It is my view that the future health of this industry depends on a sincere and concerted effort to come to an agreement on these standards by 1996. Canada has an opportunity here and we intend to pursue it vigorously. We are the world leader in the research and development of humane trapping standards. We also chair Technical Committee 191 of the International Organization for Standardization. These activities and these institutions provide us with the raw material to move forward to meet the requirements posed by the 1996 challenge.

That effort is part of the broader battle. Those of you who market furs have an intimate dependence on those who harvest them. In terms of consumer attitudes, that relationship will become increasingly intimate in the years ahead. The success of the trapping industry in developing humane standards and practices of trapping will have a direct bearing on your ability to market the garments made from those furs. And the future success of both elements of the industry will depend on a broader effort to convince consumers and countries that trapping can be, in many ways, a singular example of sustainable development.

'Sustainable development' has become a rallying cry and a slogan around the world. It refers to a mutual respect for economics and the environment. Yet this is precisely the principle on which the trapping industry, at its best, has always operated. Trappers are the original conservationists. This is the fundamental reality we all have to make the critics understand.

What Canadians - and others abroad - must continue to be taught is that this is a living heritage. That tens of thousands of Northern Canadians, many of them disadvantaged rely on this renewable resource. That responsible trappers are responsible conservationists. That your industry is a working model of sustainable development.

Government and industry in Canada have co-operated successfully thus far in bringing this message home. The work of the Fur Institute of Canada has been critical to this effort. They and we have lobbied hard in London. We have lobbied hard together in Brussels. We have invited a key group of European Parliamentarians to Canada to show them how we trap in Canada and how important trapping is for the dignity of the indigenous peoples of Canada. Professionals have been hired to argue the case in terms which European understand. John Crosbie, as Minister of International Trade, has carried the case to Brussels personally. I have done the same in my meetings with Foreign Ministers on many occasions. The Prime Minister himself has been fully involved in our strategy. That strategy has worked. And we will continue to work hard in the future to ensure that this industry survives and thrives in a world where trade is more important than ever and where developments elsewhere can have such tremendous implications here at home.