

APPENDIX A—RECOMMENDATIONS

THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

- 3.1 We recommend that the convention of budget secrecy be confined to describe the premature disclosure of matters contained in the budget, the knowledge of which would enable those who on a privileged basis have attained such knowledge to benefit financially.
- 3.2 We recommend that pre-budget consultation be expanded.
- 3.3 We recommend that the pre-budget consultation process begin each year with the tabling of various discussion papers by the Minister of Finance at the commencement of the fall sittings of the House. These papers should identify areas which could be the subject of change or new initiatives. They could contain a series of options or alternatives which the Minister is considering. This would allow those making submissions to better prepare their presentations and would properly bring pre-budget discussions into the public domain.
- 3.4 We recommend the establishment of a Budget Consultation Committee by the House of Commons. This committee would have permanently referred to it all budgetary-taxation discussion papers tabled by the Minister of Finance. Its major task would be to review the papers tabled in the fall, hold public hearings and report to the House on or before December 15, following the tabling of the discussion papers.
- 3.5 We recommend that the media lock-up not be expanded to include other organizations.
- 3.6 We recommend that media comment on the budget commence only after the Minister of Finance has concluded the budget speech. In order to facilitate the introduction of this recommendation, the budget speech should be shortened considerably.

A FIXED ANNUAL BUDGET DATE

- 4.1 We recommend that the budget of the Government of Canada be presented annually during the period between January 15th and February 15th.
- 4.2 We recommend that if the prescribed period for presentation of the annual budget occurs during a period when Parliament is adjourned, in recess, or dissolved, the budget should be presented within thirty calendar days after Parliament resumes.

AN INTEGRATED FINANCIAL TIMETABLE

- 5.1 We recommend that the Fall Economic Statement be given by the Minister of Finance early in the fall session and that the discussion papers tabled at this time be permanently referred to the Budget Consultation Committee of the House of Commons.