

Second, we have to put a premium on making Canada competitive, and keeping us that way. That means more attention to enterprise, to innovation, to co-operation among governments, labour and business.

Third, we have to pursue every export opportunity, large or small, traditional or new. I want to know how we can help you take better advantage of export opportunities.

Finally, there has to be a much greater sense of pulling together than we have known before. I hope that we can increase practical co-operation between federal and provincial governments interested in trade, and that there will be a much more active sense of team-work between the private sector and government.

Export Trade Month, which begins today, is a good example of what is possible when we do pull together. Working together, business, governments, labour, the academic community and others, have mounted a remarkable exercise right across the country – involving the time and efforts of thousands of people. Here, in Toronto, we have assembled over 50 trade commissioners and trade development officers from around the world and across Canada. You can make one-on-one contact with the individual who knows about the specific market, or the product, or the export service you want to know about. There will be some 250 events such as this in more than 30 cities and towns in every province.

We are also making our presence as exporters felt abroad – in trade missions to some 25 countries. To launch that part of Export Trade Month, Jim Kelleher, my colleague the Minister for International Trade, is today in Washington, opening International Public Transit Expo 84. From the United States to the United Arab Emirates, from Brazil to Bulgaria, from the South of France to the Sudan, Canadians will be out this month promoting an extraordinary breadth of commercial interests – everything from defence equipment to fishing equipment, from softwood to software.

Exporters are, by definition, internationally competitive. You are in immediate contact with international economic change. If you weren't confident of your ability to respond to it, and meet the competition, you would not be in the business.

In my view, the export community needs to have a stronger voice in shaping national economic policy – not only trade policy, but the full range of our domestic policies which affect our ability to compete.

The government needs to know – with very little delay – that what we are doing is accurately geared to international business development. Especially, we need to know that we are properly tracking change in international supply and demand, and in our own domestic export supply capabilities which might be exportable.

We need also to be very alert to developments in our major market, the United States. For example, right from the start of any moves toward protection in the States, we must bring to bear a careful and cogent presentation of our own Canadian interest, and of the Americans' own interest in unobstructed two-way trade. As we have seen recently in the case of steel, there is a lot that can be done through a