

Human settlements, the law of the sea, environmental protection, food and resources production, terrorism, population growth, control of nuclear armaments, economic development—all demand shared responsibility and universal involvement.

[*Translation*]

III—Individual Freedom

In speaking about the Government's plans to promote greater unity of spirit and equality of opportunity both in the world community and here at home, it becomes obvious that the achievement of both these goals demands a healthy respect for individual rights, particularly the right of free men and women to exert a real influence over decisions affecting their own future.

At a time of growing complexity in public affairs it is especially important to enhance the citizen's right of access to the information necessary to make well-informed judgements and take responsible action.

The Government therefore places great value on the continuing work of the joint parliamentary committee which has been studying the question of freedom of information, and plans to submit a policy paper to that committee in the hope that early agreement might be reached on the best methods to improve public access to government information. In the meantime, the Government will increase the number and range of internal documents available to the public.

To the same end, you will be asked to consider a Bill designed to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the Auditor General of Canada, and to provide him with better means of fulfilling his important function as a servant of Parliament.

In a similar effort to remove obstacles to information and to equal opportunity, the Government will introduce a Human Rights Bill. The major effect of the Bill will be to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, marital status, or physical handicap. In particular, the Bill will establish the principle of equal compensation for work of equal value performed by persons of either sex. It will establish a citizen's statutory right to gain greater access to personal records in federal information banks and to correct that information when it is in error. It will also limit the gathering of personal information by the Government.

[*Text*]

The Government and all Parliamentarians are concerned about the extent to which the average citizen is informed about Parliament. The Government wishes to provide access to the Parliamentary process for as many Canadians as possible. It will therefore seek approval to enable the proceedings of the House of Commons to be broadcast.

IV—Role of Government

It is essential to the enhancement of unity, equality of opportunity and individual freedom that Canadians work to-

gether in a spirit of co-operation and mutual respect. To that end, it is important for all participants to have a well defined view of their respective roles in the pursuit of national objectives.

It is appropriate, therefore, to define the role of government in economic and social planning and action. There are some who acknowledge only a very limited role for government, believing that the market system allocates resources most efficiently for production and growth, is least wasteful, and most conducive to individual liberty and initiative.

That view is vigorously opposed by those who insist on a continually expanding role for government in directing economic growth, correcting the inadequacies of the market system, and assuring a socially acceptable distribution of incomes. This view asserts that government spending and intervention must increase to compensate for the failure of the market to serve social goals.

The Government favours a middle road between those two extremes.

This middle road represents a commitment to a society in which all Canadians can develop their full potential, a society in which justice, compassion, tolerance and understanding lead to a strong and united Canada, a society based upon individual initiative and marked by personal freedom. The choice of the middle road implies a reliance on the market to stimulate the growth Canada needs, together with an enduring commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity. On the other hand, that choice also implies that the working of the market must be improved and that less costly, less interventionist ways must be found to pursue social goals.

These choices have shaped the Government's legislative program for the coming months, just as it will shape appropriate policies for the post-control period.

Obviously, the development of the new strategies required by the times in which we live will demand the closest possible co-operation among governments, workers, businessmen, cooperative and voluntary organizations and all other sectors of society. To that end, the Government will launch a major series of consultations throughout Canada to secure a greater sharing of economic and social responsibility among all Canadians.

Consultation in this context does not mean simply informing the public about Government decisions. Nor does it mean an aimless search for the opinions of others. It means that the Government will place before interested Canadians its assessment of the major problems we must solve together, and its definition of the available options.

Parliament will have a vital role to play, as of course will the provincial governments and their municipalities. For example, the provinces will be asked to enter into early consultations with the federal government on the renewal of agreements relating to the anti-inflation program, and on the process by which, at the appropriate time, controls may be removed.

The Government is confident that Canada will realize the great potential of the next decade, because Canadians in all