

recognized to be supportive and complementary. Government can act as facilitator and catalyst - without interfering with the enterprise and talents of our businessmen. I believe my Department has been performing that well, and I will continue to place the emphasis on this.

Canada must export to live. The success of our export efforts will determine to a very large degree the extent of our economic success as a nation. I thus bring to this new assignment a desire to work closely with you, to be accessible, and to contribute in any way I can to the growth of our exports. I am particularly interested in helping you find new and more extensive markets for value-added goods and agricultural products. It is essential that every region of the country share in the benefits of international trade, and particularly the creation of jobs. I recognize that while our export position is generally healthy, there remains plenty of scope for growth and refinement. The challenge of maintaining and expanding our share of world exports is formidable.

We are confronted by a stagnant international economy - which decreases export opportunities for our goods and services. A variety of our trading partners are being prodded to impose restrictive obstacles against imports by hard-pressed domestic producers. Competition is becoming increasingly keen world-wide. It is thus crucial that Canada remain internationally competitive. This is one audience which is acutely aware of this imperative. But, we cannot continue to be competitive if inflation in Canada increases our costs of production at twice the cost of our competitors.

To this end the Government's 6 and 5 programme is vital to our success. Like many Canadians, I have been encouraged by the very positive response to this programme. We are in a period of rapidly decreasing interest rates - but our rate of inflation is decreasing at a slower rate. If interest rates in this country in their downward trend bump against the inflation rate, they will be inhibited from going lower. It is thus all the more imperative that we lower inflation as rapidly as possible.

I ask you to have your companies subscribe, as many already have, to the 6 and 5 programme. This voluntary programme in the private sector constitutes our most rapid path to prosperity - and it does so without the burdensome and clumsy jungle of government red tape inherent in a compulsory wage and price controls programme.

Canada is blessed with an abundance of riches capable of making it a great industrial nation - but only if