

Business Opportunities Centre, we would not have known of this project."

Sprung Structures Instantanées Inc. of Pierrefonds, Quebec, has been shortlisted for pavilions for Expo 98 in Lisbon. Sprung's President said: "Through what started out as a fax from the International Business Opportunities Centre, we are now poised to supply a large international fair . . . fast-tracked to great potential business opportunities."

The fifth initiative, still "in the works," is the creation of a team to provide special support to selected major projects worldwide. Its purpose will be to co-ordinate high-level support and to champion these projects.

By co-ordinating a sustained effort from Canadian companies, we shall go a long way toward levelling the playing field against foreign competitors who have so often used their political leverage to win projects for which Canadians were otherwise completely competitive.

Let's face it. The real success of Team Canada will come from its ability to promote Canada offshore. The Prime Minister is a promoter par excellence. So is the Premier of New Brunswick. And there are many other excellent Canadian promoters, a number of whom are here today.

For too long we have had Canadian companies with world-class products and services taking second place to companies from other countries who were not afraid to promote themselves.

Finishing second in a competition may produce some valuable lessons for the future, but it does not create jobs or income for the present. Awards for "congeniality" and being "photogenic" are nice, but Canadians want jobs, and developing our international business is the way to provide them.

We must also work harder to get more companies involved in international business. Today, 100 companies are responsible for half of all our exports. Some 9000 companies are responsible for 93 per cent of our exports. We must expand this base. We must transform Canada into a true trading nation. We have to get more small and medium-sized companies into the international arena. Although we intend to concentrate on those companies and those sectors with the best prospects for success, overall we must still increase the number of Canadian exporters and their competitiveness.

To this end, we must better prepare and train companies in all regions of the country to help them become successful exporters. We must also continue to provide market intelligence, sales leads, business contacts and country-specific and sector-specific