

competitive challenges of the nineties. They also see the creation of partnerships among people committed to quality as among the best ways of meeting those challenges.

Tonight, at the Canada Awards for Business Excellence (CABE), we will honour some of the companies that have shown the way. This year's Conference Board study profiles past CABE winners who have lessons to teach. These companies, and others like them, represent the cutting edge of management practices around the world. They point the way for other Canadian companies. They demonstrate how attention to quality means increased productivity, sales, and profits.

The Conference Board has studied several components of how total quality management improves performance. I would like to focus on the importance of leadership. "As employees assume more and more responsibility," the study reminds us, "there will be an accompanying transition in the role of managers away from being controllers, toward being facilitators."

This transition is taking place in the Government of Canada. Gone are the days when government tried to control the economy. The days of the National Energy Program, the Foreign Investment Review Agency, wage and price controls, and massive government subsidies to direct the economy are behind us.

In their place are measures to facilitate, co-ordinate and, where appropriate, to lead: measures to build a consensus so that we can all work together to take the decisions we need to build a prosperous future. The Government of Canada has the responsibility to provide a plan -- a vision for the kind of economy we want to build:

- o An economy that embraces the global marketplace, and does not shy away from competition;
- o An economy driven by the enterprise and creativity of the private sector;
- o An economy where well-paid, highly skilled workers use the best technology to produce products and services that can be sold around the world with a minimum of trade barriers; and
- o An economy that creates opportunities for every Canadian in an innovative, inclusive society founded upon a strong learning and risk-taking culture.

That is our vision. Canada is a rich country; our workers are among the best paid in the world. Competitiveness is about the ability of those workers to improve their skills, increase those wages, and build more high paying jobs.

In this kind of economy, we can not, we should not, and we will not compete on the basis of low wages or low standards. The only way we can compete is by ensuring that "Made in Canada" is a