

always getting the right kind of information, or that we are tapping all the right sources. I'm also not convinced that we put the information we do get to as good use as we might.

Here again, we are asking advice and help from the people concerned. As you know later this year we are convening a National Economic Conference as the first step in coming to grips with the Canadian economy. In the years gone by, when an economic conference was called it was the federal government sitting down with the provinces, and they mainly talked about who should do what and to whom. But this conference will have representatives of business and labour, the people who really make the economy run. What a revolutionary idea - well it may be to some, but to us its just plain common sense.

Information will, of course, play a large role in the whole process. One of the things I hope to learn from the conference is the ways in which my department can be of more use - both in getting the information businessmen need, and in helping them overseas.

One aspect of foreign policy both the Prime Minister and I are particularly interested in is our relationship with the countries of the Pacific rim - including the western United States. We are convinced that we have only touched the surface of the trade potential that this part of the world has to offer.

As you have probably heard the Prime Minister has announced that he has asked Pat Carney here in Vancouver to develop suggestions for getting greater input from the private sector into the public policy process dealing with trade in the Pacific rim. She will be examining ways to bring together everyone involved to find out what they have learned that can be of use in promoting trade. We have lots of knowledge already - our exporters have been doing business in this region for years and years. But to date we have no way of passing on this information to others, no way of learning from the mistakes that some of our people may have made, or from the successes that businessmen from other countries may have had.

We don't yet know just what the mechanics will be - that's why we've hired Pat. But we are convinced that it will be the beginning of a process that will bring a new partnership of the public and private sectors to an area of opportunity that is so important to everyone here.

There are other areas, too, where we shall be making greater provision for a role for the public to be involved in public policy. We intend to reactivate the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy and National Defence. They will be conducting investigations into a variety of topics, and the public hearings they will hold will give everyone who is interested a chance to be heard and to contribute to the government's thinking.