

Here in Canada, our Government has always recognized the importance of sound economics as a basis for social and political stability. We have taken tough -- often unpopular -- decisions to ensure Canada's future in this regard. Increased trade liberalization, tax reform, privatization, deregulation and reduced government spending are at the heart of our economic agenda.

Also fundamental to our agenda is the development of our human resources, either through basic education, skills updating or re-training. We have introduced a number of major new programs in this area, and the recent speech from the throne sounded the call for greater federal-provincial co-operation in this area. There is also an opportunity here for greater international co-operation.

With this objective in mind, I have asked my department to plan a round table this fall to discuss a number of the programs which are being run by the European Community (EC), and what Canada might learn from these programs.

EC efforts to enhance student mobility, joint research, and linguistic skills are of particular interest. Another area of both national interest and international co-operation is the environment. Our natural habitat knows no boundaries, and we need concerted global action on matters such as ozone depletion, climate change, deforestation and biodiversity.

Basic to all of these actions are the protection and promotion of particularly Canadian values -- values that Canadians have projected abroad for over half a century:

- ♦ our support to developing countries;
- ♦ our unparalleled compassion towards the world's refugees;
- ♦ our humanitarian assistance to nations in need and areas in crisis; and
- ♦ our support for democratic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world.

These have long been Canada's hallmarks and they must be the basis for any new system of international order.

Canada has often been looked upon as a model for ethnic diversity, tolerance and prosperity amongst the world's nations. So I am sure that you must share the confusion of many Canadians who see their country once again going through a period of self-doubt and constitutional crisis.