

As Canadians we can work with hope. Our country has a proud history. Now there are expanding opportunities open to us. But they depend on our overcoming serious problems. It is only with courage and perseverance and hard work that we will achieve the better life that is within our power, for ourselves and for our children.

Our progress is the work of all the people. In a free country, we are all responsible. The determination of my Ministers is that the Government through its policies will contribute the leadership, the purpose, the decision that are its responsibilities to the people.

The character and strength of our nation are drawn from the diverse cultures of people who came from many lands to create the Canada that is ours today. The greater Canada that is in our power to make will be built not on uniformity but on continuing diversity, and particularly on the basic partnership of English-speaking and French-speaking people. My Ministers are determined that the partnership shall be truly equal. For that high purpose they are establishing, in consultation with the governments of the Provinces, a commission charged to study, thoroughly but urgently, how the fundamentally bicultural character of Canada may best be assured and the contribution of other cultures recognized.

To make us a more united people, the Government will in all things strive to strengthen and to give new direction to our Canadian confederation. It will foster the spirit of co-operative federalism, fully respecting the rights of the Provinces while safeguarding and extending the equality of opportunity which properly belongs to all Canadians in all parts of our country. In these purposes, as in others, my Ministers will seek frequent consultation with the governments of the Provinces.

The principles of Canadian external policy are those of the United Nations Charter, to maintain peace with justice and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to promote the welfare of all peoples by international co-operation. My Ministers will seek solutions to international problems by diplomacy and negotiation. In particular, my Ministers will strive to lessen international tensions and halt the arms race by seeking measures of controlled disarmament, including a treaty to end nuclear tests under reasonable safeguards.

Meantime, my Ministers believe that there is no alternative to the maintenance of the defences of the free nations as a deterrent to war. In particular, a strong North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including adequate defence on the North American continent, remains essential to Canada's security. For this purpose, the armed forces of Canada should have available the modern weapons necessary to perform effectively the defensive tasks which Canada has undertaken in the alliance. Next week, we will take pleasure in welcoming to Ottawa the Ministerial Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. My Government is convinced that on the foundation of the present alliance a true community of the Atlantic peoples will one day be achieved.

In recent weeks the Prime Minister has had friendly and constructive discussions with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and with the President of the United States of America. By such visits and other means the Government will continue to improve political and economic relationships with other countries. It is my Ministers' intention to assist in enhancing the unique value of the Commonwealth partnership in international relations.