

international competition in a way which has brought benefits both to Canadian producers and users of machinery and equipment. The rationalization of this industry has meant increased export revenues for Canadians and has allowed Canadian industry to benefit from being able to use more efficiently-produced machinery and equipment. This, in turn, of course, has enhanced the international competitiveness of other sectors of the Canadian economy.

This is a year of opportunity and for attention to trade. I would like to tell you how we intend to respond and why.

I will soon place before my Cabinet colleagues two important documents: one will be a major review of Canadian trade policy. I believe this review will allow me to underscore to the Cabinet the key role played by trade in the Canadian economy. It will provide the basis for any modifications in Canadian trade policy needed to take account of the environment we face in the 1980s.

A second paper will outline the approach which Canada should adopt at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) ministerial meeting this coming November. I will be endeavouring in the weeks ahead to engage Canadians in these matters to provoke a broader discussion of the issues of concern and the areas of potential.

Yesterday in Ottawa, at a federal/provincial trade ministers meeting, I had an opportunity to discuss these issues with my provincial colleagues and to learn first-hand their concerns, their ideas, and their priorities about a trade strategy which will benefit all Canadians.

I would like to concentrate today on the priorities we see meriting attention at the GATT ministerial in November. As you know the GATT sets out the contractual basis for most of Canada's trade relations. It has served us well. I believe it provides a framework in which Canada can defend and advance its interests more effectively than through any bilateral agreement. It is a matter of absolute priority that we strengthen the GATT.

The November ministerial, which incidentally Canada will chair, is the first such meeting since 1973. While it is not intended to launch a major new round of trade negotiations it is expected to agree on a work program, a trade agenda for the 1980s so that issues of concern and areas of particular interest can be addressed in ways to strengthen and make more relevant, hence more credible, the system as a whole. We attach the highest priority to a successful result at this meeting and are preparing our case on issues of special concern to Canada.

Basically we want the international trading community to come to grips with a number of problems which were not dealt with or which were not handled in a satisfactory manner in earlier GATT negotiations.

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