

Epilogue

The desirability of improved Canadian export performance was noted at the beginning of this book. As a nation we already export about 30 percent of total goods and service output to other countries. This level must be maintained if we are to continue to enjoy current living standards. To improve living standards, of course, requires that Canada increase its exports. This is no easy matter, however, because world markets are in a state of flux.

Not only has competition in most industries and markets intensified in recent years, but the slate of competitors has changed. New rivals have emerged from the Pacific Rim and Third World countries, as well as others, to challenge the established order in many fields. Some markets are proving difficult to penetrate as protectionist measures are taken or more buying and selling takes place between economic groupings of nations. Technology is another factor. Many of the advanced industrial countries Canada compares itself with have made rapid strides forward. This has resulted in a flow of newer, better and less costly products and services, and sometimes Canada has lagged behind in these developments.

Canada faces a challenge now as never before. A better exporting job must be done or else a decline in living standards is inevitable. Canadians must look to the companies that generate our economic wealth for decisive action.

The experience of the 27 Canada Export Award winners shows that exporting success is achievable. Exporting is seldom a simple matter, but with careful thought and considerable effort, the barriers to success can be surmounted. In their pursuit of profits outside Canada, companies would do well to bear in mind the reasons for the award winners' high performance, as well as their advice.