- assistance to low and middle income Canadians through tax reform,

- the $110 million federal literacy initiative,

- reform of the Divorce Act and assistance in enforcing support orders through a national registry, through legislation I introduced as Minister of Justice,

- extension of Canada Pension Plan Benefits to over 85,000 widows and widowers,

- federal funding for housing for senior citizens,

- initiatives for youth, such as the $56.5 million Canada-Newfoundland Youth Strategy announced last week by the Prime Minister, to assist young people in making a successful transition from school to work,

- the passage of a national Multiculturalism Act and the establishment of a separate Department of Multiculturalism, and

- support for Canadian films and television programming under the Film and Video Policy and the new Broadcasting Policy.

It has been a balanced agenda, responsive to the needs and aspirations of Canadians throughout the nation. With the marked improvement in the government's finances, continued economic growth and an improved international competitive position, we will increase ability to commit resources in a renewed mandate to social and cultural development, as well as to regional initiatives.

That is one of the reasons why I take such strong exception to the baseless charges about social programs, regional development and Canada's sovereignty levelled against the Free Trade Agreement by the two Opposition leaders. John Turner and Ed Broadbent seem to be vying with one another to see who can make the most alarmist allegations about Free Trade. I wouldn't blame Canadians for being concerned by what Messrs. Turner and Broadbent are saying, if there was any truth to it. But there is not.

John Turner has said that social programs are threatened by the Free Trade Agreement. He is wrong. They aren't even covered by the Agreement.

John Turner says that more open competition with the U.S. will force us to cut back on social services to keep businesses in Canada competitive with those in the U.S. He is wrong again. Since 1947, there has been: