

My Ministers were given a mandate to change the direction of the Government of Canada, as we enter the 1980's. The basic purposes of that change will be to enhance the rights, freedoms and opportunities of individual Canadians, and re-establish the spirit of partnership and renewal which are fundamental to our Federation.

[*Translation*]

The mandate of my Ministers is also to build upon the special strengths of Canada. We front on one mass market and three great oceans, with access to the world. Each of our regions contains vast physical resources which can be the basis of industrial strength well into the future. Confident local identities are emerging—rooted in language, custom and community—and yielding a cultural vitality unique among nations. My Ministers believe that the way to build a whole nation is to respect our individual parts, and you will be invited to consider measures to build upon the diverse regional and cultural strengths of Canada.

During the past four months, my Ministers have made every effort to change the climate of federal-provincial relations which has prevailed in recent years. As a result of their efforts, there has been visible progress. An agreement on lotteries has been concluded and agreement in principle has been reached with certain coastal provinces concerning offshore mineral resources. Bringing about this change in relations is fundamental to my government's philosophy. Working with our provincial partners, we seek practical solutions to concrete problems.

To make federalism work, it is essential to change the attitudes of the past and the federal government must set the example. Accordingly, it is a primary goal of my Government to bring about a new era in federal-provincial relations. Consultation and cooperation will be the hallmarks of that new era. The time has come to reconcile our differences. It is time to work together to fully realize our country's potential. It is by building for the future that we will renew Canadian federalism. In this spirit, my Government looks forward to the next Conference of First Ministers in Ottawa this year.

[*English*]

Citizens and Parliament can control government only if information is public. You will be asked to approve Freedom of Information Legislation based on the principle that government information should be available to the people, that necessary exceptions to that principle should be limited and specified, and that disputes over the application of those exceptions should be resolved independently of the Government.

To correct inequities currently borne by some Canadian individuals, you will be asked to amend sections of the Indian Act, to extend spouses' allowances in circumstances where they are now denied, to amend certain legislation respecting veterans, and to further protect the privacy of individual Canadians.

You will also be asked to consider reforms to extend the power of Parliament. Proposals will be submitted to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization to strengthen

the powers and resources of parliamentary committees, to accord more prominence to private members' initiatives, and to make my Ministers more accountable to you. The Standing Committee also will be invited to consider the question of a permanent Speaker for the House of Commons.

To demonstrate the capacity of Parliament, you will be asked to approve the immediate establishment of four small select committees, with the resources and powers necessary to enquire fully into the special needs of handicapped and disabled Canadians; measures to strengthen the role of the voluntary sector in our society; policies with respect to foreign ownership, including the operations of the Foreign Investment Review Agency; and measures necessary to prevent recurring cost overruns on major government projects. You will be invited to establish a Joint Committee to undertake a broad enquiry into the future development of nuclear energy in Canada. In addition, Standing Committees of Parliament will be invited to examine Canadian cultural policy, Canadian foreign policy, and the retirement income needs of Canadians in the 1980's. Annual Reports of Crown Corporations, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Economic Council of Canada and other similar bodies will be referred automatically to the appropriate committees of Parliament.

To broaden responsibility for the management of Parliament, Privy Councillors not members of Cabinet and drawn from both sides of the House will be invited to serve as Commissioners of Internal Economy.

[*Translation*]

My Ministers believe the greatest immediate challenge facing Canada today is to restore growth, confidence and jobs to the Canadian economy. While our economy faces serious immediate problems, my Government believes the economic potential of Canada is the strongest in the world. My Ministers will propose a five-part strategy to build on that potential.

First, my Ministers will reduce the burden of government on the economy by better controlling expenditures. A new expenditure management system has been introduced within the government to set strict overall spending limits, to ensure that all ministers accept full responsibility for spending restraint, and to require that funds for new programs come from savings in existing programs. In that context, you will be asked to approve creation of a Ministry of State for Social Development to better coordinate social programs and expenditures.

My Government has initiated action to reduce the size of the Federal Public Service and to offer for private purchase and ownership Crown corporations operating in areas where direct government intervention is no longer necessary. Legislation will be introduced to strengthen control over and accountability of remaining Crown corporations. You will also be asked to approve "sunset" legislation to provide a regular opportunity for Parliament to judge whether Government programs and agencies need continue in their present form, if at all. The form of the estimates to be placed before you will be improved to provide more accurate information. You will be given projections of Government revenues and expenditures for