

But notwithstanding the additional element of support offered by the Interdepartmental Secretariat, as well as, traditionally, by the PCO, there is certainly no doubt in my mind that, in terms of human resources and accumulated experience, the Department of External Affairs remains in the strongest position to provide the kind of support required if it has the will, the imagination and other necessary qualities to do so.

Of course, when we support the Minister, we are effectively supporting the Prime Minister in the sense that the best possible advice is going forward through the Cabinet system to the Head of Government in those major areas of particular concern and interest to him. A good example of the kind of support the Department can provide is to be found in the arrangements that have been made to prepare for the Economic Summit of the industrialized countries, of which the Prime Minister will be host and Chairman, and which will take place in July in Ottawa. In recognition of the special and particularly heavy responsibilities placed on the Prime Minister personally, there is an Executive Steering Committee for the Summit that is chaired by the Secretary to the Cabinet and includes myself as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs as well as the Deputy Minister of Finance. Its purpose is to provide general guidance throughout the preparatory period.

Reporting to the Steering Committee, and responsible for the basic preparatory, supervisory and planning work on the substantive and administrative aspects of the Summit is an Interdepartmental Planning and Preparations Committee (PCC) which will meet with increasing regularity at the deputy minister level as the Summit approaches. The chairmanship of that Committee is entrusted to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, who has also been designated Personal Representative of the Prime Minister for the Summit. As Deputy Personal Representative, Mr. Larry Smith, an Assistant Under-Secretary, is engaged full time, with the assistance of an interdepartmental team of officials, in ensuring that all substantive aspects of the preparations are dealt with in a timely and effective fashion. Beyond that, Derek Burney of this Department has been named Summit Administrator reporting to the Preparatory and Planning Committee; he is engaged full time as head of the support group looking after all physical and administrative arrangements for the Summit.