

The Government want these firms to flourish. We know that this is a more promising avenue to growth and employment than bailouts - or taking a plunge into our own brand of protectionism.

These, then, are the threats and the opportunities we face.

In confronting them, we have been very conscious of the fundamental importance of involving Canadians directly in any decisions about what we might negotiate. In our Economic Statement of November 1984, we promised to consult closely with business, labour and other groups. And throughout the last year we have done just that.

Beginning in January, we issued a discussion paper on "How to Secure and Enhance Canadian Access to Export Markets" In May, we tabled "Future Directions for Canada's International Relations".

In the spring, my colleague, Jim Kelleher, the Minister for International Trade, undertook an intensive six week tour across Canada meeting with hundreds of interested Canadians.