

*The Address—Mr. Witer**[Translation]*

With Quebec and New Brunswick, we set the stage for the very first francophone summit, and now Canada will host the second summit in 1987.

*[English]*

Also in 1987, we will be hosting the Commonwealth Conference in Vancouver. Canada has played a major role in the Commonwealth over the years. Our membership has provided us with an important tool for exerting our influence in world affairs. Our efforts to abolish apartheid in South Africa is an example of the leading role Canada has taken within the Commonwealth.

Canada has an obligation to the international community to expose the gross violations of basic human rights in all countries including the Soviet Union where freedom of movement, freedom of speech, and freedom of religious belief are restricted and denied and where families have been cruelly separated by the refusal of passports for those seeking to join relatives in the West. Canada has been in the forefront of the fight to maintain basic human rights for all.

The measures which the Government has taken against South Africa; the pressure which has been exerted by the Canadian Government on the Soviet Union in order to free dissidents such as Shcharansky, Orlov, Danylo Shumuk, Oksana Meshko, Viktoras Petkus and others; and the representations made during the recent visit of the Soviet Foreign Minister have all had as their aim the restoration of human rights to those who have been denied them. We have spoken out for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Our participation in the United Nations is central to Canadian foreign policy and has allowed us to press our position on such issues as verifiable arms reductions and human rights violations to an even larger international audience. My trip last year to the United Nations General Assembly in New York afforded me the chance to study the institution more closely. I am pleased to note Canada's renewed commitment to the UN. Through the UN, Canada has taken a leading position in pushing for verification of existing arms control agreements and for the negotiation of new accords. Verification is not an obstacle but is an essential component of any solution to disarmament issues. Our renewed commitment to the UN will allow us to continue efforts to strengthen the UN's capacity, to investigate allegations of non-compliance, and to expand UN involvement in the formation and execution of verification provisions.

My constituency of Parkdale—High Park has a vibrant and vocal ethnocultural community. Recent statistics show that some 60 per cent of my constituents have an ethnocultural heritage. Canada's commitment to a multicultural mosaic has provided this country with a rich and unique character and has made an invaluable contribution to Canadian society.

The Government has initiated a number of key accomplishments in the field of multiculturalism. One of the highlights was the first ever federal-provincial-territorial conference on

multiculturalism which was convened in 1985. The conference was an unqualified success, and the Government has since gone on to establish the House of Commons Standing Committee on Multiculturalism.

My constituents have expressed concern over Canada's refugee policy. I am pleased that their concerns have been addressed in the Throne Speech. The reforms as outlined in the Throne Speech will produce a system which is both fair and effective. It will assist genuine refugees in need of protection and discourage abuse of Canada's humanitarian tradition. It was the promise of freedom and justice which brought all of us to Canada. It is the fulfilment of that promise which makes us proud to be Canadians.

In order to fulfil that promise of freedom and justice, the Throne Speech addressed many important issues in the area of social justice. We have undertaken to remove barriers which have prevented women from participating freely and equitably in the mainstream of Canadian society. We have resolved to take effective action against child abuse, pornography, child prostitution, and the growing threat of illegal drug traffic. The Throne Speech has addressed the major concerns of my constituents. It has addressed the concerns of the region and of all Canadians.

Members of Parliament cannot limit their concerns and interests to issues which only affect those residing within the arbitrarily drawn electoral boundaries. Our responsibility lies in representing the people of our province and of our country. It is incumbent upon all of us to discuss issues and to make decisions which are good for Canada. Therefore, I will take a few moments to address the Government's commitment in the field of agriculture.

As a Member of Parliament from Ontario, I recognize the importance of the promises made in the Throne Speech. While my colleagues will recognize the singularly unique expertise of a Member of Parliament from an urban riding commenting upon agricultural policy, I can assure the House of my sincerity. Ontario is Canada's leading agricultural province with a gross production of over \$5 billion, which amounts to over a quarter of the output of Canadian agriculture. Ontario is also the leading food manufacturing province in Canada with 10 per cent of our manufacturing labour force employed in processing agricultural commodities.

My constituents are aware of the problems which have developed in Canadian agriculture over the years, as many of them are employed in the numerous food processing facilities located in the Toronto area. I take particular pride in the Government's accomplishment in respect of the agricultural sector. The Throne Speech has made the strongest commitment to agriculture which has ever been made in a Throne Speech. Many of the problems which exist have been created by subsidies and preferential treatment being given to some commodities in the international market-place. We have pledged to protect Canadian farmers in the face of unfair practices conducted beyond our borders.