

There is no better means to spread the message of freedom than through the people-to-people contact of day-to-day trade. The Government of Canada has no qualms, therefore, about Canadian businesses seeking to expand their horizons in a variety of world markets.

Business people have told us in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade that the most valuable service we provide to the business community is market information and market intelligence. You have indicated that if we have to do less, we should do less, but do it better.

The Government, therefore, is refocusing its efforts to improve the way in which we gather and disseminate information and intelligence. We are looking at novel ways of applying technology to help us communicate business opportunities more quickly and more effectively. We are forming networks of expertise to ensure that individual Canadian firms are informed in a timely manner of suitable business opportunities. We are working to improve the training of our officers so that they will be able to serve you better when you contact them for assistance.

To tackle the problems inherent in having too many players in the international trade game, we are working at the federal level and with the provinces to develop and apply a Team Canada approach to support for Canadian international business development. The aim here is to reduce duplication among government departments and the provinces and to co-ordinate our activities better. The concept is to provide coherent, consistent and comprehensive government support for international business development — support that is well communicated and easily accessible to the business community in Canada.

With the formal blessing of the Trade Team Canada concept by Federal-Provincial Ministers of Trade in March, officials are working now to implement the approach. We are striving for a pragmatic, client-oriented approach which will broaden and deepen our existing efforts to integrate and co-ordinate our international business development support to meet the needs of Canadian business.

Currently, 60 percent of all Canadian exports are made by just 100 firms. Less than eight percent of Canadian business, and only 15 percent of Canadian manufacturers, are directly engaged in exporting.

Yet during 1992 and 1993, 85 percent of all new jobs in Canada were created by small business. Many of those jobs are quality jobs that require superior skills and offer an outstanding work environment. Canadians need quality jobs. To help create more of them, the Government is going to place much more emphasis on