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COMPENDIUM OF DOCUMENTS ON CANADIAN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Honourable James Kelleher, Minister for International Trade today released a compendium of basic documents concerning the upcoming trade negotiations. The documents explain the background and rationale for the government's commitment to pursue a bilateral agreement with the United States in conjunction with active participation in the next round of multilateral trade negotiations.

This book is being distributed in order to facilitate informed public debate on one of the most important issues facing the country.

Regarding the bilateral dimension of the initiative, Mr. Clark recently said:

"These negotiations will not be the first time that Canada and the United States will be sitting down to try to improve our trading relationship. In 1935, we concluded a bilateral trade agreement. Other countries joined us in 1938 and the principles of our bilateral accords formed the foundation of the post-war multilateral trading system. Together we also worked out the autopact agreement and the defense production sharing arrangements. Precisely because we have risen to the challenge before, we know that success at the end of the day repays the enormous effort, and good will and trust which negotiations require."

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He went on to say:

"Past rounds of multilateral trade negotiations under the GATT have brought the benefits of trade liberalization to both countries. And each multilateral round has, in effect, amounted to a series of mini-bilateral rounds in which the Canada-U.S. agreement has always served as a significant building block to the larger results which have fostered our post-war prosperity".

Mr. Kelleher also recently stated:

"If Canada and the United States could lead the way, if we could show the rest of world that trade liberalization is to everyone's advantage, I believe it likely that the multilateral negotiations would yield better results -- that more barriers would come down faster throughout the world".

At the historic Quebec Summit in the Spring of 1985, President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney pledged to establish a climate of greater predictability and confidence for bilateral trade. They charged the U.S. Trade Representative and the Minister for International Trade to "...chart all possible ways to reduce and eliminate existing barriers to trade...". Since then, this mandate has been pursued by examining a broad range of policy issues. This book presents documents concerning Canada's negotiating objectives, various statements and reports on the trade negotiations, the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, the conclusions of the Macdonald Commission and the reports by the Minister for International Trade and the United States Trade Representative.

Copies of this compendium will be available through the Department of External Affairs by calling Info Export, toll free, 1-800-267-8376.

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