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| **Gouvernement/Government** | **Législature/Legislature** | **Session** | **Type de discours/Type of speech** | **Date (d/m/y)** | **Locuteur/Speaker** | **Fonction /Function** | **Parti politique/Political party** |
| Fédéral/Federal | 34 | 3 | Discours du Trône/Speech from the Throne | 13-05-1991 | Ray Hnatyshyn | Governor General | Progressive Conservative Party of Canada |

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Members of the Senate;*

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the House of Commons:*

It is my great pleasure to greet you as you begin the third session of the Thirty- Fourth Parliament.

In the past fifteen months, my wife and I have had the wonderful privilege of meeting thousands of Canadians at Rideau Hall, La Citadelle and in our visits to all of Canada's provinces and territories.

Whatever our background and wherever we live, Canadians share the same basic hopes and aspirations. We are proud of the great country we have inherited. Above all, we are determined to leave it a better and stronger place for our children.

As Gerda and I meet Canadians, we are moved by the special regard they have for the Queen and for the role she has played in our history. In the nearly forty years since she ascended the throne, she has been served by all seven Canadian Governors General-and she remains a living example of the continuity and stability that are fundamental to our system of government.

Therefore, it was a genuine pleasure this year, on your behalf, to congratulate Her Majesty and wish her well on the occasion of her 65th birthday.

This session will be a turning point in Canadian history. Let no one doubt the seriousness of the challenges we face as a country. You will have the responsibility and the opportunity to forge an historic accommodation that embraces all Canadians, overcomes division and discord and charts a course for prosperity for generations to come.

Last July 1st, when Her Majesty came to celebrate Canada Day with us, she said that the unity of the Canadian people is the paramount issue we face, just as it was at the time of Confederation. And, she went on, ``There is no force, except the force of will, to keep Canadians together.'' I believe that Canadians have that will.

I am confident that, as long as we adhere to the values on which this country was founded-belief in human dignity, respect for differences, civility in our dealings with each other-we cannot fail.

Canada's history is the history of builders and achievers. Together, Canadian men and women have created a society that is as free and fair as any on earth; ours is one of the oldest functioning democracies, a beacon of freedom to people everywhere. Around the world, Canada is respected for the constructive role we play in global affairs, for the protection we accord human rights, for our tolerance of diversity, for our environmental sensitivity, and for our cultural accomplishments.

Canada is also envied for our economic prosperity; we rank only thirty-first in population but we have built the world's eighth largest economy. That economic strength allows us to maintain some of the most advanced social programs in the world.

Millions of people around the world would gladly give up everything they have for the privilege of living in Canada. That is a reality and a response to those who would question the value of Canadian citizenship.

Canada will celebrate its 125th birthday during this session. Let us ensure this celebration will be looked back upon as a milestone on the road to a united and prosperous future. Let us mark the occasion with the same spirit of confidence and the sense of accomplishment with which we all commemorated Canada's Centennial and Expo 67. We believed then that the potential of Canada was unparalleled. It remains so now.

To realize our great promise, we must rebuild Canadian unity and overcome the acrimony, apathy and incomprehension that currently undermine it. In light of the global economic revolution of the past quarter century, we must make the reforms necessary to earn the prosperity that until recently seemed our birthright. And we must address urgently the doubts that have been expressed about the capability of our institutions and processes to achieve these goals.

Proposals will be put before you, therefore, that address these three major concerns of the Canadian people and of my government-unity, prosperity and government responsiveness. I am confident that the importance of these issues will persuade all Parliamentarians to put Canada first, set partisan motives and calculations aside and work together for a stronger country.

**Canadian Unity**

We have been confided the stewardship of this great nation, constructed across an entire continent by generations of men and women determined to make a home for themselves and a future for their children. They were inspired in their sacrifice by the conviction that tolerance and fairness, courage and compassion, and individual enterprise and neighbourly cooperation could overcome all obstacles and erase all doubts.

Now it is the turn of our generation to overcome obstacles, erase doubts and strengthen Canada to meet the challenges of the 21st century. In doing so, we must safeguard the rights of all Canadians and maintain those standards of citizenship that distinguish the Canadian way of life. Some reforms can be achieved through legislation or policy; others require changes to our attitudes; and still others require changes to our constitution.

A constitution should unite a nation. Canadians across this country should be able to see themselves and their hopes and aspirations mirrored in their constitution. It is the one document that all Canadians should refer to with pride. That is not presently the case in Canada. And no task is more important than making the constitution a more faithful reflection of who we are, what we represent as a country and what we aspire to be as a people.

The Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future was constituted to give Canadians an opportunity to express their hopes and views on the kind of country Canada should be, so we can continue to prosper as we cross the threshold together into a new century. The Special Joint Committee on the Process for Amending the Constitution was established to allow Canadians to be involved in finding a better way of making constitutional changes. Both have increased understanding among Canadians of how much we have in common-as well as awareness of what we stand to lose. Canadians are moving beyond focusing on problems to suggesting solutions.

My government looks forward to receiving the recommendations of the two committees by Canada Day, July 1st. The committee reports, together with the work of similar commissions in several provinces and the soundings you have all taken of the views of your own constituents, will give you the understanding you need of what Canadians want done.

My government will formulate new proposals to focus public discussion on the goal of a more united and prosperous Canada. The proposals will suggest changes in federal and provincial powers and responsibilities and in national institutions. My government will be guided by a number of basic principles:

-that Canada has already proven its worth; we seek change in order to improve Canada, not to discard what we have accomplished together;

-that the Government of Canada represents all Canadians; and that change can be achieved only through reasonable compromise and enlightened accommodation of the interests of all Canadians;

-that Quebec's unique character must be affirmed and that the particular interests of the West, the Atlantic provinces, Ontario, the North and aboriginal Canadians must be recognized, as well; and

-that the tests of constitutional reform will be fairness, effectiveness, efficiency and the protection afforded to the rights of all Canadians.

In September, my government will refer its proposals to a joint parliamentary committee that will be established to consult with Canadians. The committee will be asked to travel in order to hear the views of men and women across Canada. In each jurisdiction it visits, the committee will be mandated to meet in public session with its counterpart provincial or territorial legislative committee or, where no such committee exists, with counterpart legislators. It will, also, meet with aboriginal groups. The committee will be asked to report back to the government within five months.

After receipt and consideration of the committee's report, my government will propose a plan for a renewed Canada for consideration by the people of Canada. You will be asked to approve enabling legislation to provide for greater participation of Canadian men and women in constitutional change.

My government will work to create a climate in which Canadians can deepen their understanding of their history and traditions and their appreciation of their country's rich diversity. Events planned for 1992, the 125th anniversary of Confederation, will contribute to this greater understanding.

The ability of Canadians to live together in harmony and the ability of Canada to make a major contribution to world affairs depend upon our understanding of who we are as a people. To reduce Canada's vulnerability in an age of rapid, even turbulent, change and of growing interdependence, it is more important than ever that we speak to the world with one, clear and united voice. My government will conduct an active foreign policy in support of the full range of Canadian interests around the world-economic and security, environmental and social. My government will continue to promote democratic values and to defend human rights in the conduct of its foreign and development assistance policies as the best means to ensure progress and stability in a changing world environment and to safeguard Canadian security and prosperity.

**Participating in Prosperity**

My government will invite Canadians to participate in fashioning a new agenda for prosperity. The goal is to build a prosperous society in which all men and women have an equal opportunity to participate, in which benefits and responsibilities are fairly shared and in which the most vulnerable among us are protected.

There is much more to Canadian unity than amending the constitution. Our unity is strengthened by a strong economy. And prosperity is enhanced by a united country. But disunity in the face of the global economic challenge invites decline.

Economic recovery depends on reducing interest rates. To bring interest rates down, government finances have been put on a sound base. My government is controlling its spending and has established low but achievable inflation targets. That is the way to restore the confidence of Canadians in their future.

Restored confidence means new investment and new investment means meaningful jobs and a better life for all Canadians. With this fiscally disciplined approach, the economy will recover in the second half of this year and will grow strongly in 1992.

Looking to the longer term, Canadians are asking themselves what the future holds for themselves and for their families in a world that is changing so rapidly and profoundly. Deficit reduction, tax reform, free trade and productivity growth are all part of my government's plan to secure the future of Canadians.

Canada is inescapably part of the global economy. As citizens of a country that depends for its prosperity on the sale abroad of almost thirty percent of all it produces, the importance to Canadians of being able to compete effectively in international trade can scarcely be overstated. We guarantee our future, not by running from global competition, but by meeting it head-on, by equipping ourselves to compete with the best, by giving ourselves the economic conditions we need to be competitive and by making world markets accessible to our products.

The Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement has helped to secure the Canadian economy in difficult times. Private, non-residential investment in Canada, as a share of our gross domestic product, has been taking place at record levels. For the first time in sixteen years, Canada has been attracting more direct investment-the key to job creation and job opportunities-has been going abroad.

My government believes North America-wide free trade is a logical next step-and one that would increase the prosperity of all Canadians-if an acceptable agreement can be negotiated with Mexico and the United States. My government will, also, cooperate with Canadian business to take advantage of the growing opportunities for sales and investment abroad as a result of the integration of Europe and of the extraordinary economic growth in Asia. A successful outcome to the multilateral trade negotiations in Geneva would be the best means to guarantee access for Canadian products in markets around the world; achieving that goal will be a high priority for my government.

At home, my government will work with provincial governments to ensure that Canada becomes a single, integrated market from coast to coast to coast. We need to eliminate:

-policies that favour a province's suppliers over lower cost producers from other provinces;

-regulations that often make it simpler for producers to ship their products abroad than to sell them in neighbouring provinces;

-hiring policies that give preference to provincial residents over those from other provinces; and

-occupational standards that restrict the work opportunities of residents of other provinces.

By one recent estimate, there are approximately five hundred barriers to interprovincial trade in Canada. My government's goal is to see barriers to interprovincial trade, services and investment come down by 1995, so that Canada becomes a single, integrated market. The savings to taxpayers and consumers of creating such a market could be as high as six billion dollars-about one thousand dollars a year for a household of four. And a larger home market would allow more Canadian companies to achieve the size and competitive edge to launch themselves successfully into world markets.

Today, investment and technology flow with ease across international boundaries, markets for goods and services are specialized and decisions on production are made on a world-wide basis. In the interdependent world we live in, prosperity is more and more a factor of knowledge, skills and innovation. The nations and firms that are succeeding and will continue to succeed in this environment are those whose people are educated, productive and able to adjust to rapidly changing circumstances. The risk for Canada is not so much to be undercut by developing countries with low-wage economies but to be outperformed by technologically advanced countries with highly paid, highly skilled workers.

Increasing our productivity across the full range of Canadian industry-resources, and services-is the only way to secure and enhance our prosperity over the longer term. Productivity is the difference between prosperity and decline. The prosperity of all Canadians and our ability to maintain social programs depend on the productivity of Canadians. Increasing productivity requires the collaborative efforts of governments, business, labour and individual Canadians, in all regions. To focus this effort, specific targets will be set.

Canadian business, workers and governments will be asked to work together to generate at least two and a half million new jobs by the year 2000 and to raise the real incomes of Canadians by at least twenty-five percent, by the same year. These targets are realistic and achievable in a united Canada, whose population will approach thirty million people by the end of the century and whose gross domestic product will approach one trillion dollars.

My government believes that building Canadian prosperity and securing Canada's natural environment are fully compatible goals. International experience demonstrates conclusively that the most economically prosperous nations are also the most environ- mentally conscious nations. To safeguard our natural heritage, my government introduced this country's first comprehensive environment plan-the Green Plan-during the last session.

Over the coming months my Minister of the Environment will be implementing a wide range of Green Plan initiatives. These initiatives, in concert with action on the part of the provinces and the private sector, will ensure that Canadians, today and tomorrow, have the clean air, water and land essential to sustaining human health and enhancing our quality of life. They will also encourage the development of ``environmentally friendly'' products for which there are growing markets abroad.

We must, all of us, come to grips with the fundamental issues involved in integrating environmental and economic considerations into our decision-making. My government will, over the coming months, consult with provincial governments, industry and environmental leaders to explore means of complementing current regulatory approaches with innovative instruments that would achieve positive environmental results without prejudicing economic prosperity.

Increasing economic prosperity is first and foremost an issue of people. Canada's ability to prosper in a global economy will be determined by the level of Canadians' educational achievement, by the sophistication of our management skills and by our attitudes to work and to change. In the dawning knowledge age, how well we live will depend on how well we learn.

Canadian men and women must have access to both the skills and the lifelong learning opportunities necessary to improve their job prospects and ensure their own prosperity. But Canadians are questioning whether this country's approach to learning, despite the great dedication of so many talented educators and administrators, is adequate for the times. The issue is not exclusively, or even primarily, money. Canada already spends more money per capita on education than almost any other industrialized nation does. Every year the federal government alone spends about eleven billion dollars, directly and indirectly, on education and training. The issue is results.

-Three out of ten students drop-out of high school before graduating.

-Four out of ten adults cannot read or do math well enough to perform everyday tasks.

-Canadian industry spends less than half as much on training its employees as American industry does, a fifth as much as the Japanese and an eighth as much as the Germans.

This is not the kind of performance that will guarantee increasing prosperity for our children; in fact, it has given rise to concerns whether the next generation of Canadian men and women will be the first to have a lower standard of living than their parents. The time has come to reach a national consensus on performance, goals, partnerships and priorities for learning. As part of my government's new agenda for prosperity, a discussion paper on learning will be published to stimulate and focus discussion on education and training.

My government recognizes that education is a provincial responsibility under the constitution and respects that fact. My government also recognizes that Canadians are concerned about education, and would like to see Canada-wide goals established, with provincial endorsement and cooperation, for the year 2000. These goals could include:

-cutting illiteracy rates in half;

-ensuring that ninety percent of Canadians attain high school diplomas or the equivalent by age twenty-five;

-doubling the number of post-secondary graduates in mathematics, the sciences and engineering; and

-quadrupling the training provided by employers to their employees.

Students and parents, employers and employees, educators and governments will be asked to work together to develop a “learning culture,'' just as we have developed an environmental culture. My government will, also, ask the newly created Labour Force Development Board to present proposals in this area. The objective is to equip Canadian men and women to participate fully in creating and sharing Canadian prosperity.

The full participation of Canada's aboriginal peoples in Canada's economic prosperity and political life is a goal shared across the country. To put itself in a position to respond more effectively to the needs of the aboriginal peoples of Canada, my government will appoint the Right Honourable Brian Dickson, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, to serve as a special representative of the Prime Minister in order to consult widely on the terms of reference and membership of the Royal Commission announced recently and report back to my government.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that the Commission neither delays nor negates constitutional, legislative or other reforms already under way. These reforms include land claim settlements, community development initiatives, education and other activities launched during the second session of the Thirty-Fourth Parliament. In cooperation with Indian people themselves, my government will explore alternatives to the Indian Act, especially concerning land, monies and self-government. Finally, my government will consult aboriginal Canadians on changes in the system of administering justice. The goal is to work with Canada's aboriginal peoples so that they control their own lives, can contribute to Canadian prosperity and can share fully in it.

Our children are the most important yet most vulnerable members of our society. Last September, at the Children's Summit in New York, the attention of people everywhere was focused on children at risk. Seventy-one leaders pledged that that moment would last a decade. My government will bring forward a plan to implement the commitments it made that day; the objective is to see Canadian girls and boys better educated, better protected and better nurtured so that they can make their own contributions to Canada's future. In addition, my government will review its policies in relation to the family, the most fundamental building block of Canadian society. And my government will appoint a blue ribbon panel of concerned Canadian men and women to inquire into the serious problem of violence against women in our society.

My government will lay before you proposals for programs and policies to remove the barriers still faced by disabled Canadians to full participation in Canada's political life and economic prosperity. The government plans to implement a five-year strategy that will resolve issues such as access to employment, training, housing and transportation, public sensitivity and community integration.

You will be asked to approve a number of other important legislative initiatives to advance the economic, social and international interests of Canadians. You will, also, be asked to appropriate the funds required to carry on services and expenditures authorized by Parliament.

Changing the Way Ottawa Works

Change is the hallmark of our age; in Europe, in Asia, in Latin America, old assumptions are being discarded and new principles are being adopted. In Canada, too, new problems require new solutions. There is a need for change in the way Parliament does business and in the way governments conduct their affairs. The goal is to ensure that Canadians' agenda is Parliament's agenda.

In the Thirty-Third Parliament, a committee of the House of Commons proposed far- reaching reforms to enhance the role of private members. During that Parliament, you implemented more than eighty-five percent of the committee's recommendations. And, at the end of the last session of this Parliament, further changes were passed to make it possible for members to spend more time at home with their constituents so that they can be more effective in representing the wishes of their constituents and more efficient in the conduct of House business.

Canadians exercise their democratic freedom by electing their representatives through secret ballot. During this session, you will receive the report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform established by my government. Canadians want to know that their elected representatives have the power and authority to represent them. My government will propose further reforms so that all Members of Parliament can fulfil better their obligations to their constituents.

The respect of the people for Parliament and Parliamentarians is essential for a healthy democracy. But the appearance, and sometimes the reality, of excessive party discipline and over-zealous partisanship, of empty posturing and feigned outrage have eroded that respect in Canada. Members will be asked, therefore, to consider new procedures for assessing legislation, for raising grievances on behalf of constituents and for questioning government. This will further enhance the role of individual members and afford them greater independence.

Change is also necessary in the ways governments conduct their affairs. Governments must be both effective and efficient, implementing necessary programs at the lowest cost to taxpayers. Canadians understand that their governments simply cannot afford to do everything that is demanded of them. In the past six and a half years, through prudent management, the growth of government operations has been curtailed. My government has privatized and eliminated twenty-four Crown corporations and streamlined virtually all government departments and agencies. Since 1984, ninety thousand employees have been removed from the payroll of the federal government and its agencies. During this session, my government will take that process further. A draft spending control bill to cap federal program spending will be referred to a parliamentary committee for consultations with Canadians. Legislation will also be introduced to create a debt servicing and reduction fund so that GST revenues, as well as monies from further privatization of Crown corporations and from voluntary contributions, will be used to service the national debt. Streamlining of government structures and operations to serve Canadians better and to save taxpayers' money will continue to be a priority of my government.

Better ways to conduct the business of government are being examined. Improvements in the management of the public service, started under the Public Service 2000 initiative, will continue. A public service reform bill will be introduced into Parliament in support of this renewal program. Additional special operating agencies will be created to provide better service to Canadians through more autonomy and a sharper focus on objectives. My government will, also, continue to privatize those government activities best done by the private sector, as well as wind up and consolidate other agencies in order to provide Canadians better value for their tax dollars.

**Conclusion**

You are meeting at a pivotal period in the life of Canada, a time to reinvigorate our country and to bring Canadians together in a renewed accommodation. My government will work with Canadians to achieve its goals of unity, prosperity and responsive government so that all Canadians feel themselves a part of this country, so that all Canadians have an equal opportunity to share in its bounty, so that all can see themselves reflected in its constitution and so that all will find the fulfilment of their aspirations in its future.

Honourable Members of the Senate, Members of the House of Commons, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will play a decisive role in the strengthening of Canada. History will be the judge of the decisions you make on these critical issues.

May Divine Providence be your guide.