

OTHER KEY INITIATIVES

1. Regional Development

- ° The most pressing need is an effective package for the economic revitalization of Montreal including the \$300 million Innovatech project and possibly other initiatives involving a mix of cultural, communications and infrastructure projects.
- ° In pursuing this, it will be important to manage it in a manner which is sensitive to other regional difficulties:
  - Newfoundland -- the fishery and Hibernia;
  - Ontario -- plant closings, industrial restructuring; and
  - Manitoba and Saskatchewan -- which face serious medium-term structural difficulties.

2. Hibernia/Megaprojects

- ° While it is too early to be certain, there is a risk that the weak international economy and prolonged low world oil prices will lead to threats of shutdown for Hibernia or other megaprojects.

3. Children's Initiatives

- ° The reform of the child benefits system was set out in the budget. This is an important reform and a major accomplishment for the government.
- ° An additional \$500 million has been set aside for Mr. Bouchard's children at risk package. Mr. Bouchard is proposing consultations with the provinces over the next several weeks on community action projects and initiatives for natives.
- ° When these consultations are completed, Ministers will need to take final decisions on approach to initiatives for children at risk. An announcement is planned for the spring.

4. ODA/Eastern Europe

- ° The government will likely face major pressures for aid to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics.
- ° The key issue is the extent of the government's response and whether funding should be sought within the existing ODA allocation.

5. Airlines

- ° The financial problems facing Canada's two major air carriers will confront the government with some delicate and highly symbolic choices as the restructuring of the industry unfolds.
- ° There will almost certainly be implications for the current round of bilateral air negotiations with the U.S.

6. Natives

- ° Substantial resources are already committed to this area and major negotiations on claims are underway.
- ° This file will require careful management in the months ahead given its linkages to the constitutional process.

7. Immigration

- ° A package of major reforms is being developed to streamline the refugee status determination system and increase government's ability to control the number and mix of immigrants.
- ° This would be a major initiative with significant resource implications. Mr. Valcourt's proposals were endorsed by Ministers at the February 27 meeting of the Human Resources Cabinet Committee. Final decisions on whether to proceed will now be needed at Operations and P&P.

8. Canadian Human Rights Amendments

- ° Proposals being developed for Cabinet consideration include two key measures:
  - to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation; and
  - to require employers to take reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of disadvantaged workers -- e.g. the disabled.
- ° In light of the very sensitive nature of the issue of sexual orientation in the government Caucus, the question is whether Ministers will want to proceed.

9. House/Senate Management

- ° The government has a full agenda of major legislative initiatives to be managed in the House and Senate. The key elements include:
  - Budget legislation (several bills to be introduced from March to June, including the reform of child benefits);
  - Conflict of Interest legislation (in Special Committee);
  - Telecommunications Act (introduced February 27);
  - Copyright Act Amendments (fall);
  - Disabled Legislative Package (spring);
  - Child Pornography (fall);
  - Electoral Reform Legislation (fall); and
  - If Ministers wish to proceed, legislation to reform the immigration and refugee systems (spring).

10. Royal Commissions

° Over the next six to eight months, the government will need to respond to four Royal Commissions which may have a number of controversial recommendations:

- Royal Commission on Dryden Air Crash -- report due to be received on March 10;
- Task Force on Violence against Women -- interim report in June, final report in December;
- Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies -- report in October; and
- Royal Commission on Passenger Transportation -- report in October.