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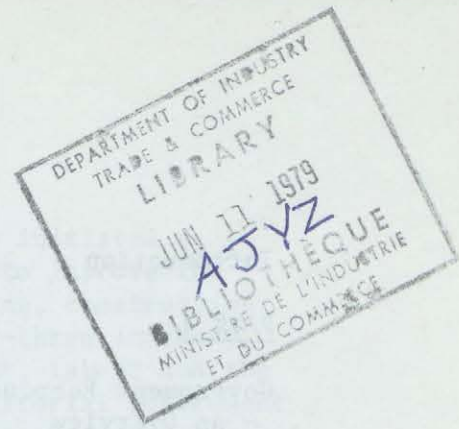
RESPONSE OF THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
CONSULTATIVE TASK FORCE ON
**THE CANADIAN OCEAN
INDUSTRY**



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Canada

RESPONSE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
CONSULTATIVE TASK FORCE
ON THE
CANADIAN OCEAN INDUSTRY

May 1979

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INTRODUCTION

In February 1978, Canada's First Ministers initiated a process of private sector consultations on measures to improve the performance of, and the outlook for, the manufacturing, construction and tourism sectors in the Canadian economy. Twenty-three industry task forces composed of representatives of management, labour and the academic community were formed. Provincial and territorial government representatives also participated. By August 1978, each task force had completed a series of meetings and submitted a report reflecting conditions in their industry to the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Industry and to the public. These reports covered a broad range of themes and the recommendations contained in them are viewed by the federal government as important elements in the development of future industrial policies.

Following the work of the industry sector task forces, an Overview Committee was established consisting of five representatives from the Canadian Labour Congress, five from the business community, one from the academic community and a chairman from the private sector. This group worked from the task force reports, identified common viewpoints, and presented policy recommendations applicable both to the economy generally and to specific industries. The Overview Committee presented its report to Governments in October 1978.

In reviewing the prospects for industrial growth over the next number of years, the reports prepared by the industry task forces and the Overview Committee addressed two objectives in particular. The first, was to improve the competitiveness and productivity of Canadian industry. The second was to create long-term employment.

In assessing these reports, and the Government's responses, a number of themes emerge which are of particular importance and which might be viewed as providing a framework for the recommendations of business and labour as well as the responses of the federal government. These themes focus on measures to increase industrial competitiveness, especially by building on comparative advantage, the support of regional economic development goals and the enhancement of Government, business and labour cooperation.

While the substance of what has emerged from the task force and Overview Committee reports is of utmost importance, the Government believes that the emerging process of Government/private sector consultation is of equal value. In this regard, the federal government views the results of these consultations as a significant framework for evaluating existing policies and programs and for designing new ones.

As part of its commitment to the consultative process, the Government has undertaken to respond to the recommendations of each of the 23 task forces and to those of the Overview Committee. An initial Government response was released in November 1978 entitled "Action for Industrial Growth - A First Response". A specific response to the task force recommendations with respect to taxation measures was included in the Budget Papers of November 16, 1978. On February 21, 1979, the Government released its response to the forty-six recommendations made by the Overview Committee. The Government agreed with and outlined measures in relation to the overwhelming majority of these recommendations. This document, Response of the Federal Government to the Recommendations of the Consultative Task Force on the Canadian Ocean Industry, constitutes one of the twenty-three detailed federal government responses paralleling the task force reports and should be viewed as part of the ongoing consultative process.

It is recognized that the implementation of policy initiatives indicated in these responses will, in many cases, take some time and that a few other policy issues have yet to be fully addressed. The Government will, therefore, be continuing to respond to the industry task force reports. The Government also believes that continuing consultations between business, labour and Government on specific industry sector problems are a vital part of this further work. Finally, the Government recognized that in responding to the recommendations, not all participants of each task force will be satisfied. In a number of instances, dissenting reports were submitted along with or after completion of the task force report. The Government is committed to addressing all recommendations contained in these reports.

PART I

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS - AN OVERVIEW

The Consultative Task Force on the Canadian Ocean Industry, in its report to the federal and provincial governments pointed out that at the present time the industry is small, fragmented and under-capitalized but, given the right circumstances, has the potential for substantial growth during the next decade. It stressed the technological nature of the sector and the importance of foreign markets at a time when the domestic market for ocean industry goods and services has been relatively small, variable and uncertain. In its recommendations the task force dealt with the need for incentives to encourage the development of new technology which would not only be capable of meeting the challenge of Canadian offshore resource exploitation, but would also have worldwide application; the need for Government to create an environment which would encourage offshore exploration and development of hydrocarbon resources; the need for regulations to encourage higher Canadian content; means of ensuring an adequate supply of trained manpower; and the desirability of forming an industry association, which would facilitate continuing industry, Government and labour consultations.

The Government endorses the view that this industry has the potential for substantial growth. To ensure that this potential is realized, the Government has implemented a number of measures designed to promote Ocean Industry. The most important of these are in the area of R & D. R & D incentives have been expanded, both in the recent budget and through an expansion of direct assistance programs, such as the Enterprise Development Program. A number of additional measures, described in detail in the next part of this paper have also been recently announced. On a more general level, the Government has announced its intention to strive for a significant increase in the share of national resources devoted to R & D and has set a target for national expenditures on R & D of 1.5 per cent of GNP to be reached by 1983.

The suggestion by the task force that Government establish and fund a Canadian Ocean Technology and Research Authority would entail substantial public expenditure. While a definitive response to this request cannot be provided at this time, the suggestion merits serious consideration and is currently under active review by the Government. This review is expected to be completed by mid-1979.

The Government agrees that there are substantial benefits in establishing an industry association in this sector and is prepared to assist the association during the early formative stages. Similarly, the Government welcomes a continued dialogue with labour and the industry.

In the area of manpower planning, the Government has already entered into cooperative projects in several sectors such as aerospace and shipbuilding, and is prepared to enter into other such arrangements wherever feasible. At the same time, the private sector should give higher priority to manpower planning and should play a greater role in advising on training and educational requirements.

The Government has taken positive steps to increase the benefits to Canadian industry from a variety of resource development projects. The Advisory Committee on Industrial Benefits from Natural Resources Development (ACIB) currently hears presentations from companies undertaking projects on Canada lands and provides advice to departments on whether the industrial benefit objectives of the Government are being met. In addition, the proposed Canada Oil and Gas Act contains Canadian content requirements. The Government is further establishing a mechanism to ensure that federal procurement is used effectively to promote industrial development as well as other socio-economic objectives, consistent with Canada's international obligations.

The Government has recently announced a substantial increase in assistance for companies operating in export markets. In addition, the recently established Export Programs and Services Review Committee has been given the task of assessing the adequacy, accessibility and relevance of export promotion services and of examining the interface between these and other related Government programs.

The individual recommendations of the task force and the Government's responses to them are provided on the following pages.

PART II

DETAILED RESPONSE TO TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

DOMESTIC MARKETS (8.1)

1. Recommendation

Governments take positive steps to create a stable, long-term, economic and regulatory environment which will encourage the exploration for and development of Canada's offshore petroleum resources.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

The Government recognizes that the requirement for equipment and services to exploit Canada's offshore oil and gas forms a major market for the Canadian ocean industry. The proposed Canada Oil and Gas Act, and associated regulations, deal with the regulation of the disposition and development of oil and gas rights on Canada lands and should contribute to a more stable environment.

In February, Petrocan, a Government owned company, joined the Eastcan consortium. This will increase Canadian participation in offshore drilling activity.

2. Recommendation

The federal government implement Canadian content regulations in conjunction with the proposed Canada Oil and Gas Act to provide Canadian industry a fair opportunity to supply the goods and services required by offshore oil and gas activity.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

Canadian content requirements are included in the proposed Oil and Gas Act. The associated regulations are currently being developed. At the present time, the Advisory Committee on Industrial Benefits from Natural Resource Development (ACIB) hears presentations from companies undertaking projects on Canada lands (areas regulated by the federal government) and provides advice to departments on whether the industrial benefit objectives of the Government are being met. It has had an encouraging measure of success in increasing the benefits to Canadian industry from a variety of resource development projects.

The Government has also recently established a task force on industrial benefits composed of representatives from the private sector. This task force will be looking at ways in which major projects in the private sector can be better used to obtain increased economic benefits to Canada.

3. Recommendation

The federal government contract out more of its offshore scientific engineering data collection and hardware requirements to the ocean industry. This will help to develop the expertise needed to meet Canada's offshore resource development needs.

Government Response (Agree)

The concept of "contracting out" has been accepted throughout Government and is recognized as contributing to Canadian expertise across the industrial sectors. Budget restraints have recently reduced spending in various categories and have reduced the funds available for "contracting out". However, the Government will continue to encourage increased contracting out to the ocean industry to meet its science and technology requirements rather than performing them in-house.

4. Recommendation

The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce should provide increased resources of manpower and finances to assist in the development and penetration of the ocean industry into the domestic market.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

The Government strongly supports the need for the industry to develop and penetrate the domestic market. The introduction of Canadian content requirements into the proposed Oil and Gas Act will be a major thrust in this direction. The work of the ACIB currently contributes to this objective.

The Government is also attempting to make better use of Canadian supply capabilities for public and private purchasing activity by:

- a) developing a computerized Canadian source list for broad distribution to trade posts and selected foreign purchasers;
- b) for large purchases, public and private, establishing a government-industry review mechanism to maximize opportunities for Canadian-based suppliers to bid on domestic and foreign major projects.

EXPORT MARKET (8.2)

5. Recommendation

Industry, Trade and Commerce support of ocean industry export marketing be continued and strengthened in conjunction with the proposed ocean industry trade association.

Government Response (Agree)

The Government is undertaking a comprehensive review of its policies bearing on export promotion with an emphasis on information systems, use of public agency expertise, export incentives, consultant promotion of Canadian equipment and services, export consortium formation, use of free consulting services as an export tool and federal/provincial coordination in export marketing. The recently established Export Programs and Services Review Committee has been given the task of assessing the adequacy, accessibility and relevance of export promotion services and of examining the interface between these and other related Government programs.

During the period April 1979 - March 1980, the ocean industry will participate in four major trade exhibits in four different countries. In addition, there will be missions which have yet to be finalized. The Government will entertain suggestions for additional events of this type and has recently announced an increase in the budget for fairs and missions of \$2.1 million. This should assist industry in participating in more of these events. Additionally, some unique export marketing promotions centering around trade fairs will be undertaken in conjunction with certain trade fairs and missions at an estimated cost of \$2 million (additional) annually.

The Government has also announced that the Program for Export Market Development (PEMD), market identification and incoming buyers' activities, is extended to the United States for which an additional \$2.5 million will be available annually. PEMD's overall budget will be increased by a further \$5 million per year to support the establishment of sustained market activities.

6. Recommendation

Consideration be given to negotiation with other countries to establish reciprocal market access on an equitable basis and preferably for specific products and services.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

Improved access for a range of products in this and other sectors is being negotiated in the current multilateral trade negotiations (MTN) which are expected to conclude by mid-1979. The need for further action in this sector will be determined once the MTN results are known.

INCENTIVES FOR EQUITY INVESTMENT (8.3)

7. Recommendation

It is proposed that resident Canadian corporations engaged in high technology, high risk ocean industry be allowed to offer equity investors the following tax incentives:

- a) A 150 per cent tax deduction against ordinary income of equity investment in ocean industry made by Canadian corporations or individuals.
- b) Such investments, when sold, should be subject to capital gains (25 per cent) tax on the entire value received upon such sales.

Government Response (Noted)

There have been several important changes in income tax legislation in the past few years which are strongly supportive of equity investment. These include the major enrichment of the dividend tax credit, the inclusion of capital gains under the \$1,000 exemption for investment income, the unlimited deductibility of capital losses on shares or debts of Canadian-controlled private corporations against income from any source and the deferral of up to \$200,000 of capital gains on intergenerational transfer of incorporated small business shares. These are available to all industrial sectors.

The specific incentive for equity investment for the ocean industry proposed in the recommendation is not acceptable for the reasons outlined in the following paragraph extracted from the November Budget Papers.

"The Second Tier Committee recommended that special tax concessions for particular industries should be based only on a clearly established rationale. This principle recognizes the importance of all types of industry to Canada and enunciates the philosophy that special tax incentives should exist only where exceptional national priorities can be identified. The Government is in full agreement with this viewpoint. Proliferation of a large number of tax incentives tailored to individual sectors or circumstances will in the end dilute the effectiveness of each incentive and risk serious harm to the efficiency of the Canadian economy while adding to the complexity of the tax system".

The Government is working toward easing the problem of equity availability for small business. A new program - Industrial Credit Assistance - has been recently announced. It will make it easier for smaller industrial companies to get financial backing from sources such as pension funds by involving the federal government in sharing some of the risk in loans to smaller companies.

TAXATION (8.4)

Duty Drawback

8. Recommendation

- a) That appropriate Government departments devise a system for handling temporary importations without requiring payment and subsequent drawback of duty, while still maintaining the necessary controls to ensure compliance with tariff regulations.

Government Response (Agree)

Procedures for handling temporary importations without requiring payment of duty have been introduced. Remission of customs duty will be allowed at time of entry on goods imported for processing and subsequent export.

Loss-Carry Forward

8. Recommendation

- b) The five-year limitation on loss carry-forward be extended to a minimum of ten years with provision for further extension depending on the state of the industry as a whole.

Government Response (Noted)

The November 16, 1978 Budget Papers presented by the Minister of Finance responded directly to this proposal as follows:

"Business losses and the investment tax credit may be carried forward to reduce tax for up to five years. Given the discretion in timing available to taxpayers in claiming capital cost allowances, this provides for full utilization of the amounts in all but exceptional circumstances. Many sectors, in arguing for extension of the carry-forward, referred to the United States, where the period is seven years. However, it should be noted that in that country CCA must be claimed in full in each year, giving taxpayers significantly less flexibility in the claiming of deductions."

"The five-year time period in Canada matches the period for tax reassessments. To change the connection among the two types of carry-forwards and the reassessment period would entail considerable administrative difficulties for taxpayers and taxation authorities, without significantly aiding many taxpayers."

Federal Sales Tax

8. Recommendation

- c) Equipment purchased by a Canadian corporation primarily for leasing to companies engaged in offshore operations should be exempt from payment of federal sales tax at time of acquisition regardless of the length of the equipment's initial offshore use.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

The elimination of federal sales tax and duty will not necessarily give competitive parity to Canadian corporations. The Government has manifested its intention to achieve competitive parity between domestic suppliers and foreign suppliers by publicly circulating a schedule of equalizing fees to be paid for coasting trade licences by foreign suppliers. The Government believes that this is the most effective route to the agreed objective.

It should be noted that the 12 per cent manufacturers' sales tax was reduced to 9 per cent in November, 1978.

Capital Cost Allowance

8. Recommendation

- d) Equipment purchased for primary use in offshore operations or for use in the manufacture or development of offshore hardware be included in Class 12 or other appropriate classification having a minimum prescribed rate of 100 per cent.

Government Response (Disagree)

The combined effect of the capital cost allowance provisions and the newly enriched investment tax credit is to provide a very favourable tax environment for expansion of the ocean industry. Machinery and equipment used in manufacturing and processing qualifies for a two-year write-off under the capital cost allowance system. This special allowance for depreciation was introduced in 1972 and extended indefinitely in 1975. During 1976, offshore drilling vessels became eligible for an additional allowance of 15 per cent of their undepreciated capital cost.

The Minister of Finance proposed an enrichment of the investment tax credit in the November 16, 1978 budget. While the basic rate of credit is 7 per cent, a rate of 20 per cent applies in the Atlantic Provinces and the Gaspé and of 10 per cent in other areas designated under the Regional Development Incentives Act. The budget also proposed the extension of the investment tax credit at a rate of 7 per cent to transportation equipment including water transport.

Research and Development Incentives

8. Recommendation

- e) Government should encourage increasing industrial R & D and that COTRA be the principal vehicle to achieve this in the ocean industry.

Government Response (Agree in part)

The need for industrial R & D was identified as a common theme in other industry task force reports and the Government recognizes this need.

A 100 per cent write-off of R & D expenditures of taxpayers has been in place for many years. The March 1977 budget introduced measures to extend the investment tax credit to both current and capital expenditures on R & D. In the April 1978 budget, a 50 per cent deduction was provided for incremental R & D activity. The investment tax credit as applied to R & D was enriched by the Minister of Finance in the November, 1978 budget. At the same time, the Minister proposed a special R & D tax credit of 25 per cent available for small business corporations in all parts of the country. Direct support under the Enterprise Development Program for grants to encourage high risk research, design and development will increase from \$25 million to \$60 million annually.

Refer to the next response regarding COTRA.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT (8.5)

9. Recommendation

- 1) It is recommended that Governments establish a Canadian Ocean Technology Research Authority (COTRA) to support Canadian development of the ocean technologies needed to develop Canada's frontier resources. It should be funded to a level of \$100 million over five years.

Government Response (Under review)

Care is called for in assessing this recommendation because of the scale and continuousness of public expenditures that is likely to be needed. Further, it is desirable to be assured that the institutional mechanisms for innovation that are chosen are likely to provide the most technical strength to the private sector that the expenditure will buy. As a result, a definitive response to this request cannot be provided at this time. However, the suggestion merits serious consideration and is currently under active review. This review is expected to be completed by mid-1979.

9. Recommendation

- 2) It is recommended that guidelines be established to make Canadian ocean industry service activities eligible to participate in the Enterprise Development Program. There should also be investigated the need for a Government loan repayment guarantee for service companies to purchase Canadian-built equipment.

Government Response (Agree/Under Review)

It has been generally accepted that the ocean industries service contractor has been eligible for innovation assistance under EDP. Eligibility has been expanded for loan adjustment assistance to include business service industries which invest in intellectual assets; this will include a number of ocean industry service activities.

Concerning the second point, embryonic Canadian companies entering the offshore service field may be at a disadvantage against established international competitors. If so, a variety of solutions to the problems can be developed. The Government is willing to review this matter based on further inputs from the industry.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING (8.6)

10. Recommendation

- 1) The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce (ITC) examine and attempt to quantify Canadian ocean industry requirements for manpower over the next 5 to 10 years.
- 2) Government consider these needs in relation to existing professional and technical ocean engineering training facilities and be prepared to adapt and/or expand training facilities as needed.

Government Response (Agree in principle)

The Government strongly supports an increased private sector role in the area of manpower planning and training, including the quantification of future manpower needs, and would be prepared to provide any assistance which emerges from its own work in assessing future Canadian occupational requirements. The Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) supports a strong sectoral approach in the identification of training requirements, and would be prepared to participate with sectoral groups in the identification of sectoral training needs, programs, and policies. Where there are potential implications for CEIC-supported training programs, the CEIC is prepared to respond to specific joint management/labour proposals in this area.

It should be noted, however, that the primary responsibility for providing trained ocean industry professional technical manpower would fall under provincial education jurisdiction.

While CEIC, as part of its employment strategy for the 1980's, is undertaking forecasts of labour requirements in some 500 occupational groups including engineers, it is not specifically addressing the need for ocean engineering professionals as this is a relatively new group for which adequate data does not exist. The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, however, is planning to study, in consultation with CEIC if necessary, the ocean industry's needs with respect to professional manpower over the next 5 to 10 years.

Once the professional manpower requirements have been assessed, the adequacy of training facilities can be determined and appropriate programs designed and implemented where necessary.

10. Recommendation

- 3) Government and industry examine the possibility of arranging foreign assignments for newly trained people pending the development of Canadian needs.

Government Response (Agree)

This recommendation would have application only in very limited circumstances. It is therefore proposed that when such a requirement arises, the individual firm discuss the possibility with Government officials.

10. Recommendation

- 4) The task force endorses the funding of Centres of Excellence.

Government Response (Agree)

On June 1st of last year, the Minister of State for Science and Technology announced, on behalf of the Government, important new measures for stimulating research and development in Canada. These included:

- the commitment to use federal government procurement to stimulate industrial research and industrial development in Canada;
- new incentives to encourage job creation for scientists and technicians in industry;
- expansion of the National Research Council (NRC) Program of Industry-Laboratory Projects (PILP);
- creation of industrial innovation centres to aid industry;
- assistance in the development of regional centres of excellence; and
- increased funding for university research into areas of national concern.

In addition, the federal government has initiated federal-provincial discussions at the Ministerial level on research and development, as an indication of the strong priority given to this subject. The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has also recently announced a generous enhancement to the innovation component of the Enterprise Development Program (EDP).

One of the main objectives of the Centres of Excellence will be to achieve better integration of Government, university and industrial capability. They will be based on the natural and human resources of each area, and should assist in the development of the industrial capability of the region.

The Minister of State for Science and Technology has received a variety of proposals on this subject and there have been consultations with the several groups involved. The process customarily leading to implementation is proceeding.

11. Recommendation

Industry make increased use of personnel transfer programs between universities and industry.

Government Response (Agree)

The present policy is that the Government's mission-oriented science and technology requirements are to be directed to the private sector for performance except in very limited circumstances where it is in the national interest to have this work carried out directly by the Government. This has led to an increased participation by the private sector in areas such as national surveys and mappings, ocean hydrography, communications and transportation research, and food standards monitoring.

The above should lead to some movement of personnel between Government, industry and universities. Industry should encourage this process.

Efforts to transfer technology from Government laboratories to industry will increase. There will be an opening up of federal laboratories to the private sector including an expansion of the Program of Industry/Laboratory Projects.

TRADE ASSOCIATION (8.7)

12. Recommendation

Companies in the industry have established a committee to create a Canadian Ocean Industry Association. It is requested that the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce provide assistance to the association during its formation.

Government Response (Agree)

The first meeting of an ad hoc committee, chaired by Mr. R.A. McLean, was held at the offices of DITC in Ottawa, December 11, 1978. At the meeting, a representative of the Canadian Manufacturers Association made a presentation and it was decided that work on the establishment of a trade association would proceed. CMA is currently canvassing the industry to determine the degree of interest in this proposal.

The Government agrees with the need for an association and would be willing to consider any reasonable request for additional assistance.

OTHER OCEAN INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES (8.8)

13. Recommendation

Government appoint a task force to examine the hardware manufacturing and service opportunities related to the Canadian fishing industry and recommend actions which can be taken to capitalize on these opportunities.

Government Response (Under review).

Similar recommendations are under active consideration by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. A definitive response must await development of a broad policy framework for fisheries development in relation to the new economic opportunities in that sector.

The review is protracted because a large number of complex items have to be considered, and because it is recognized that the outcome will be of major importance for the future development of the industries concerned.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN CONSULTATIVE
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