1) “I want to congratulate the minister for realizing at last that crime is not just a sordid happening but rather a result of human behaviour brought about by our economic and social conditions which we have failed to change.”

2) “Crime prevention means recognizing connections between the crime rate and the unemployment rate, between how a child behaves at school and whether that kid has had a hot meal that day. In the final analysis crime prevention has as much to do with [the Minister of Industry, and [the Minister of Human Resources Development, as it does with [the Minister at] the Department of Justice. To some people, crime prevention is code language for going soft on crime. I don’t care what they say. I am interested in what works. It is easy to bring a crowd to its feet by demanding harsh retribution for the most brutal of murderers.”

3) “If locking up those who violate the law contributed to safer societies, then the United States should be the safest country in the world. In fact, the United States affords a glaring example of the limited impact that criminal justice responses may have on crime.”

4) “A safe society depends on strong crime prevention efforts as well as traditional justice responses. At the heart of [our] policies on crime is the belief that a safer society is one where crime is not only punished but prevented.”

5) “The best solution to crime problems is a strong, growing economy that provides more jobs and opportunity. However, if Canada is to have the safest communities in the world, we must also make sure that criminals are caught and properly dealt with, that victims of crime are given the help and respect they deserve and that everything possible is being done to prevent crime in the first place. Canadians have been saying for many years now that the justice system is too soft on criminals and too hard on victims. We agree. Our plan includes measures to ensure that criminals get the punishment they deserve and victims get the respect and treatment they deserve. At the same time, we must be realistic in recognizing that an ounce of crime prevention is worth a pound of cure. Keeping young people in school, early intervention in the lives of young people in trouble, and education of young people in general about the consequences of crime do more to prevent crime than any other kinds of action.”

6) “There was a lot of agreement that we can’t just continue to build more jails... We have to get into the social aspects that contribute to crime.”

7) “Research indicates that criminal sanctions have only a limited effect in terms of some of their traditionally-invoked objectives, such as rehabilitation, deterrence and incapacitation.”

8) “Certainty of punishment, and more especially certainty that the sentence imposed by the judge will be carried out, is of more consequence in the prevention of crime than the severity of the sentence.”

9) “It is the Committee’s view that in all cases where there has been no finding of dangerousness, sentences of imprisonment should be imposed only where protection of society clearly requires such penalty...The Committee wishes to emphasize the danger of overestimating the necessity for and the value of long terms of imprisonment except in special circumstances...The Committee maintains that imprisonment or confinement should be used only as an ultimate resort when all other alternatives have failed.”

10) “In awarding sentences, preference should be given to the least restrictive alternative adequate and appropriate in the circumstances.”

11) “All available sanctions other than imprisonment that are reasonable in the circumstances should be considered for all offenders, with particular attention to the circumstances of aboriginal offenders.”

12) “All available sanctions other than custody that are reasonable in the circumstances should be considered for all young persons, with special attention to the circumstances of aboriginal young persons.”

13) “The Committee further believes that, except where to do so would place the community at undue risk, the correction of the offender should take place in the community and imprisonment should be used with restraint.”

14) “Imprisonment is generally viewed as of limited use in controlling crime through deterrence, incapacitation and reformation, while being extremely costly in human and dollar terms...Reducing our dependency on prisons is needed to achieve greater effectiveness, balance, and restraint in our system.”

15) “The undeniable responsibility of the state to those held in its custody is to see that they are not returned to freedom worse than when they were taken in charge. This responsibility has been officially recognized in Canada for nearly a century but, although recognized, it has not been discharged. The evidence before the Commission convinced us that there are very few, if any, prisoners who enter our penitiaries who do not leave them worse members of society than when they entered them.”

16) “The use of incarceration in Canada has become a concern on a number of levels...Incarceration costs approximately 10 to 15 times as much...as community-based [sanctions]... At the same time as there are concerns about the costs...doubts about its value are also prevalent...Correctional administrators consistently report that a large proportion of persons in their jails do not belong there.”

17) “Non-violent provincial inmates should be out of jail and working in the community...I think that there are other ways of dealing with some of the criminal activity that goes on that are more effective than putting a person in jail.”

18) “If the punishment of the offender is the only object society should have in view, the Penitentiaries of Canada fully meet the requirements. They are old-time prisons dominated by the idea that, not only should the offender be punished by being deprived of his liberty and confined by iron bars and stone walls, but the avenging hand of the law he has violated should continue to bear heavily upon him in his place of incarceration...Viewed from the economic standpoint, the reformation of the convict is a matter of prime importance to the State. The prison of punishment is the most expensive prison to maintain.”

(SEE PAGE 31 FOR ANSWERS)