

NATIONAL AND GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVES
NATIONALES ET MONDIALES

Canadian Business Leaders Speak
Les chefs d'entreprises du Canada s'expriment

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FOREWORD

This issue of **National and Global Perspectives: Canadian Business Leaders Speak** canvasses a wide range of topics of interest to Canadian business and government decision-makers.

Canada's competitiveness is addressed by several of our contributors. **J. Edward Newall** suggests action in eight areas to improve Canada's competitiveness. **William Stinson** believes that the need to become more competitive will define the economic agenda through the 1990s. **Peter Janson** examines Canada's future competitiveness from the education perspective. **Thomas Di Giacomo** establishes a new competitive agenda for financial services, which includes: the need to equip businesses better, end government duplication, and coordinate public policy.

Two contributors comment on Canada's current difficult economic situation. **George Peapples** believes that the path to restored consumer confidence and stable economic growth lies in cooperation between business, labour, and government. **Robert Brown** profiles the condition of, and challenges facing, Canada's manufacturing sector.

The debate over national unity is the subject of several of our contributors. **Matthew Barrett** is convinced not only that Canadian unity and prosperity are indivisible, but that a divided Canada would be much less able to compete than a united Canada. **Guy Saint-Pierre** goes further to suggest that corporate profits, dividends, salary increases, and our ability to invest in and create employment will depend upon the political choices made by Canadians. **Arthur Mauro** views the constitutional proposals as an opportunity to re-define the fundamental aspirations of Canadians and put in place the political structures to achieve these goals. **Bertin Nadeau** highlights the advantages that bilingualism brings to Canada.



Jock A. Finlayson
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December, 1991

AVANT-PROPOS

Cette édition de **Perspectives nationales et mondiales: les chefs d'entreprises du Canada s'expriment**, traite d'un large éventail de sujets qui intéressent les dirigeants des secteurs public et privé au Canada.

La question de la compétitivité est abordée par plusieurs des chefs d'entreprises qui ont contribué à cette édition. **J. Edward Newall** propose une action dans huit domaines pour améliorer la compétitivité du Canada. **Bill Stinson** est d'avis que la compétitivité sera la principale préoccupation économique des années 1990. **Peter Janson** examine la compétitivité future du Canada du point de vue de l'éducation. **Thomas Di Giacomo** présente des recommandations pour améliorer la compétitivité du secteur des services financiers, qui comprennent: la nécessité de mieux équiper les entreprises, de mettre fin aux dédoublements de programmes gouvernementaux, et de mieux coordonner les politiques publiques.

Deux chefs d'entreprises commentent la situation économique difficile que connaît actuellement le Canada. **George Peapples** croit que la reprise de la consommation et d'une croissance économique stable passent par une coopération entre les milieux d'affaires, les syndicats et les gouvernements. **Robert Brown** analyse la situation et les défis auxquels fait face le secteur manufacturier au Canada.

Plusieurs chefs d'entreprises traitent du débat constitutionnel. **Matthew Barrett** est convaincu que non seulement l'unité et la prospérité sont indivisibles, mais que la compétitivité d'un Canada divisé serait bien moindre que celle d'un Canada uni. **Guy Saint-Pierre** suggère que les profits de nos entreprises, le rendement de nos actionnaires, les augmentations de salaires de nos employés et notre habileté à investir et à créer des emplois seront tributaires des choix politiques que feront les Canadiens. **Arthur Mauro** considère que le débat constitutionnel est une opportunité pour redéfinir les aspirations fondamentales des Canadiens et de mettre en place les structures politiques pour réaliser ces objectifs. **Bertin Nadeau** souligne les avantages que le bilinguisme apporte au Canada.

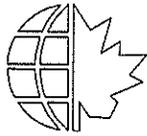


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Décembre 1991



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J. EDWARD NEWALL

... on actions necessary to improve our competitiveness

(An Address to the Associates of the Faculty of Management,
University of Manitoba, October 30, 1991, Winnipeg, Manitoba)

At a recent meeting of the membership of the Business Council on National Issues, we agreed that business and government must take strong action in the following eight areas to improve our competitiveness in the years ahead.

1. Achieve superior innovation and entrepreneurship in business. Private sector innovation is the single most important ingredient in achieving sustainable competitive success.... But so is entrepreneurship....

2. Make a firm commitment to fiscal responsibility.... With the end of the 1990-91 recession, it is imperative that the federal

government remain on track to achieve the short-and medium-term deficit reduction targets announced in the February 1991 budget.

Also required is a more determined effort by provincial governments to eliminate their deficits....

3. Institute policies to upgrade Canada's human resources....

Reducing high school drop out rates and the incidence of functional illiteracy, increasing the science and mathematics content of school curricula, and developing agreed interprovincial educational standards backed up by greater use of testing should all be top priorities.



Scaling back duplication, overlap and inconsistency in federal and provincial labour market programs would also be a positive step.

In the private sector, a greater commitment to employee training on the part of Canadian business will be essential to achieving improved competitiveness....

4. Strengthen the Canadian economic union....The Business Council welcomes the federal government's commitment to forge a stronger and modernized economic union as a key priority of the forthcoming constitutional negotiations....

5. Adopt an outward-looking trade strategy....The federal government should make a concerted effort to attend to the "unfinished business" left over from the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement -- specifically, completing the

negotiations on trade remedies under Chapter 19 of the Agreement, taking further steps to liberalize trade in services, and making progress toward harmonization of standards in agriculture and other areas.

As a participant in negotiations to create a North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), Canada's principal goals should be to improve access to the Mexican market, to protect the hard-won gains of the FTA, and to use a NAFTA to expand business and economic links with Central and South America.

6. Foster technology creation and diffusion....Much closer linkages must be forged between universities, public sector research bodies, and the private sector in order to obtain maximum economic benefit from our existing R&D efforts.



Canadian companies must become aggressive in acquiring and implementing advanced technologies to boost productivity....

Governments should examine whether changes to the tax system are required to assist in making equity capital available to small and mid-sized technology firms....

7. Match competitiveness with sustainable development....

Processes of consensus-building and economic policies that generate sustainable forms of economic development and command broad support from all sectors of Canadian society must be instituted....

Substantially greater use should be made of market instruments to achieve sustainable development goals, with correspondingly less reliance placed on inflexible,

government-mandated "command and control" regulations.

Environmental standards mandated by government legislation should be scientifically sound and performance-based....

8. Make Canada's political system work better....

By reducing the waste created by overlap and duplication in federal and provincial government programs, it should be possible to lessen the overall burden of government on the Canadian economy. Maintaining and improving the Canadian economic union will also be essential to fulfilling our national potential and to improving competitiveness.



WILLIAM W. STINSON

... on the prerequisites for Canadian prosperity

(An Address to the 12th Annual Undergraduate Business Conference,
School of Business Administration, University of Western Ontario,
October 4, 1991, London, Ontario)

Future orientation is measured by investment, putting today's profits into tomorrow's products. If we want better products, we have to sharpen our research effort. Canada has the lowest R&D of any of the G-7 nations as a percentage of output -- 1.3% of GDP.

Outward orientation is measured largely by trade. No country among the G-7 nations, with the exception of Germany, is more reliant on trade than we are. It is world trade that has given us our present standard of living.

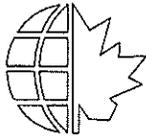
Yet, though world trade is growing as a whole, our share is shrinking. World trade has

doubled since 1983 to about \$ 3 trillion. But in the last five years, Canada's share fell from 5.1% to 4.2%, the steepest decline of any G-7 nation.

Everything we know tells us that we are not going to turn this trend around until we put our own economic house in order.

Even in the pursuit of unity, economic objectives can be achieved, as we see in the constitutional proposals on freeing up interprovincial trade.

Taxation and government spending are other areas where initiatives can be taken, apart from the process of reshaping



confederation. In many businesses, Canadians are simply taxed out of contention. Not everything we must do to improve our competitiveness needs to wait on constitutional reform.

On top of the taxes, we are faced with levels of government overlapping on everything from the environment to interprovincial trade. We seem to do everything at least twice when doing it once may be too much.

Coupled with government responsibility to pull back is people's responsibility to be more realistic about what they should expect from government. Only then will we get the government house in order. And let me say that if government is looking for a place to start pulling back, I see no reason why it should not look to business first. Business needs equitable taxation equal to that

afforded our trading partners, not subsidies and grants. Allow us tax equity and we will give up handouts without complaint...

Canada can be the envy of the world in the 21st century, or it can be a country of unrealized promises, a country that went wrong though no one knows quite why, a country that had it, then lost it.

To stay together as a country, we will all have to make some compromises. But this country was built on compromise. The BNA Act is full of it.

We want to ensure our survival and to pass on to you and your children a future at least as good as we were given; hopefully an even brighter future.

I suggest we have what is needed to prosper -- if we set our minds to it.



PETER S. JANSON

... on education and competitiveness

(An Address to the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, September 23, 1991, Halifax, Nova Scotia)

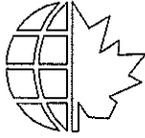
Schooling not only provides basic skills essential in the workplace but it also provides our children with an understanding of the world around them. Understanding the world they live in allows them to view it as a challenging rather than a threatening environment. It also equips children with the tools to continue to learn once they leave the confines of their schools.

As a percentage of GNP, Canada spends more on education than the United States, Japan, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. The number of Canadian adults registered in post-secondary

courses is also impressive. However, our performance up to that level is less than impressive. As an industrialized country, Canada is near the bottom as far as the number of school days are concerned. The only major industrial economy which keeps us company in this regard is the United States.

Canadian children spend around 180 days in school; their German and Japanese peers about one-third more at 240 days per year.

If the amount of homework is taken into account, the disparity between the effort we require



from our children and the work done by students in many industrialized competitor countries grows even wider....

Equally disconcerting is the fact that there is less demand today for science/technology-based courses at the secondary and university levels in Canada relative to even the enrolment numbers in the early 1980's.

In fact, it is estimated that Canada will have a shortage of 10,000 engineers by the year 2000. Furthermore, just over half of graduating high school students have taken physics or chemistry courses. In international science contests, our high school students' performance is below that of their peers in most industrialized countries.

Today we are already experiencing a shortage of skills

in business. While Canada currently experiences high unemployment, it has been noted that there are numerous positions which cannot be filled for lack of qualified personnel.

In spite of our relatively low education requirements, approximately 100,000 high school children drop out of school every year. The severity of this situation becomes obvious in the light of studies predicting that two-thirds of the jobs that will be created by the year 2000 will require more than 12 years education with close to half of those requiring more than 17 years education!!

Lower skilled workers have been major losers to automation during the past two decades, and with the transfer of manufacturing operations to low wage areas, these trends will continue.



It is imperative we convey the message that measures must be taken to remedy this situation and they must start now!!

THOMAS A. DI GIACOMO
... on a new competitive agenda for financial services

(An Address to the Financial Services Institute,
September 17, 1991, Toronto, Ontario)

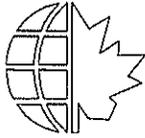
We need to free Canadian businesses to compete in foreign markets. There must be clear, simple, and flexible rules and policies that give us more flexibility to compete at home and abroad.

Canadians talk much about supporting winners so they can compete and succeed in foreign markets.

We have in this country a winning industry with a proven record of success in world markets. A

major contributor to Canada's wealth. That industry is financial services -- including insurance.

But our leadership position in global financial services is by no means secure. Today, foreign competitors are being unleashed by their domestic governments to compete in our markets as never before. These same competitors are getting support from their own governments to make doing business in their markets more difficult for us than ever before. We need to free our own financial



services companies to compete in foreign markets....

My industry -- insurance -- is a proven winner. It is one sector in the economy that has put us on the map internationally. But instead of empowering us to build on a strong and solid base, the federal government's proposal to allow bank involvement in insurance will erode our markets at home and make it harder for us to compete abroad....

We must also end the balkanization and duplication, handicapping our businesses in the domestic market. With a market of only 26 million consumers, we have managed to erect some 500 interprovincial barriers to trade....

Not only have we balkanized and fragmented our domestic market, but we have also imposed layer upon layer of regulation.

When I look across this country at the bodies regulating financial services, I see a totally fragmented approach; jurisdictional wrangling and disputes; divergent policy thrusts -- 10 securities regulators; 10 provincial trust and loans regulators; 10 provincial insurance regulators; federal trust, insurance and bank regulators -- to say nothing of Ontario's equals approach.

In short: an intolerable mess that Canadian taxpayers, consumers and companies simply cannot afford....

While other countries are launching their companies into foreign markets, Canada has failed to develop consistent and productive linkages between its trade and foreign policy....

We also need better policy linkages between the provinces



and Ottawa. I remember when access to the Ontario-based securities industry was opened up to U.S. financial institutions. Incredibly, this happened just before the Free Trade negotiations got underway.

While Canadian companies were given an edge, could this not have been an item on the table for the FTA discussions? Should we not have bargained for something in return?...

It is time for the financial services industry to put an end to the myth -- in the minds of policy makers and the public -- that we are second to any industry as contributors to Canada's wealth.

We have to work -- as individuals and as an industry -- to achieve the things we have talked about today. If we don't, then we will relegate ourselves to carving up an ever-shrinking business base among each other.

Our industry, more than most, has taken on some of the world's toughest competitors -- in their own markets -- and won.

This country cannot trade away its future. We must establish an agenda and commit the energy and resources needed to build, grow, and prosper in the future.



GEORGE A. PEAPPLES

... on renewed confidence and increased stability

(An Address to the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada,
October 25, 1991, Toronto, Ontario)

Today, both consumers and business are searching for those positive signals leading to restored confidence.

At the same time however, Canadians still face major, fundamental policy issues that will force business, government, and labour to try to reach some agreement on the directions that will put us firmly on the path to long-term, stable growth.

To survive in a highly competitive world will require us to re-think the way we run our businesses, and will demand new approaches to the formulation of both social and economic policies that affect business.

How to achieve some semblance of stability in a world that is inherently unstable will be the true test of our willingness and our ability to compete.

Achieving renewed economic growth becomes evermore important in this situation. The most successful economy will be the one that encourages the production of goods and the provision of services in the highest quality, most efficient, and most cost effective manner.

The successful economy will also be characterized by a stable business and political climate, and an infrastructure that provides such essentials as



reliable, competitively-priced sources of energy, modern transportation systems, and enlightened and competitive educational systems.

The benefits we would all reap if Canada were to achieve just such a strong and healthy domestic economy would be substantial.

A stable economic environment generates lower and stable rates of inflation; interest rates and the cost of capital would decline; business investment -- and therefore job creation -- would increase. Also, with lower interest rates, the cost of servicing the federal and provincial debts would decline, and with further fiscal restraints, both federal and provincial deficits would fall.

The increased business activity this would generate would also generate additional tax revenues, resulting in a further lowering of government deficits -- all of which could mean a lowering of Canadian tax levels.

The net effect would be sustained growth and a rising standard of living.

How to achieve a stable economy will require that all partners in the economic and social equation -- business, government and labour -- must agree on the route to take, and further agree that each has something to contribute.



ROBERT D. BROWN

... on the decline in manufacturing

(An Address to the Mold Expo, October 7, 1991,
Windsor, Ontario)

Worldwide, manufacturing is in crisis, in country after country, manufacturing is reported to represent a declining share of employment and wealth creation. We see this every day when we observe manufacturers down-sizing or closing their plants, the household names in the steel, automobile, chemical and other industries coping with the need to rationalize operations, reduce costs, and cut employment, and the growing ranks of unemployed workers who have been displaced from the manufacturing sector.

In most countries, but most remarkably in North America, manufacturing faces major new challenges -- the challenge of a competitive global economy,

environmental concerns, government interference and regulation combined with higher taxes, a shortage of trained people even though the ranks of the unemployed are rising -- all leading to higher costs, lower margins, a greater difficulty in justifying needed new investment, and a declining share of gross domestic product....

The adverse trends in manufacturing are almost universal in all developed countries, with the sole exception of the new economic tigers of southeast Asia. But let us take a brief moment to look at some of the figures for Canada -- figures that are sometimes masked by aggregates but are clear enough



...once the statistical debris is cleared away.

For example, between 1950 and 1990, employment in manufacturing in Canada rose from 1.3 million to almost two million. But, as a percentage of the labour force, employment in manufacturing fell from 26% to 16%, and is expected to go down further to 12% by the end of the decade. What this means is that in the 50 years from the end of the Second World War, manufacturing jobs have fallen by over half as a percentage of total employment.

And even the growth in the aggregate number of jobs in manufacturing is slowing down: in the 1960's the growth in manufacturing employment was 2.3% per annum, in the 1970's it was 1.8% per annum, and the 1980's employment in manufacturing is declining by

almost 6/10th's of a percent per year, with this decline accelerating into the current year....

I do not want to leave you with a feeling of gloom and doom about the position of manufacturing, or for that matter the position of the economies of Canada and the developed countries. Manufacturing is in fact alive and tolerably well -- even though it would be even better with better government policies and a better industry commitment to training. Manufacturing is changing -- and much of the inevitable decline in some areas is being made up by progress in other areas....And the developing countries have impressive resources of technology, skills, and capital to continue their progress. And Canada itself still has great potential. The Canadian economy, in the seven years through 1989, had the second-



highest growth rate of any of the G-7 countries -- trailing only Japan -- as it provided hundreds of thousands of new jobs to our growing work force. With this track record, manufacturing and the developed countries have major further opportunities for growth and prosperity -- if we get our policies right, if we keep our costs and regulation overhang under control, and if we commit to entrepreneurship and innovation....

Yes, the world is changing. The manufacturing sector as traditionally defined is in decline. But all of the developed countries do have the opportunity to work with, and not against, these trends, to build value-added processes and jobs, and to capitalize on the new service and information worlds that are coming into being. Collectively, we must have both the will and the commitment to rise to these challenges.

MATTHEW W. BARRETT

... on the indivisibility of Canadian prosperity and unity

(An Address to the Canadian Club of Toronto, November 18, 1991,
Toronto, Ontario)

The federal government is right when it states that Canadian unity and Canadian prosperity are indivisible. The unity of Canada has been the firm foundation of our prosperity and our prestige.

Canada is a presence in the world, respected and admired around the globe for its high level of security, freedom, and opportunity.



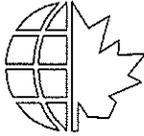
Canadians have prospered in part because we have created here one of the world's most stable political and economic environments. And in today's world, stability is a prized condition -- far too valuable to simply throw away. And throwing it away is what we would be doing, if we allowed Canada to dissolve. The standard of living which a united country has fostered would not survive its break-up. That's not speculation -- in my mind it's a certainty.

We cannot take Canada's strengths and successes for granted. We must recognize where Canada is vulnerable. Even without a break-up of the country, the economic challenges we face are daunting. Coming out of the recession, we are looking at an anaemic recovery. Even the most optimistic forecast points to a rebound far weaker

than the one that followed the last recession in 1981-82....

There are deep-rooted, structural problems that for many years have threatened our prosperity. I have not seen one shred of evidence from any quarter that a divided Canada would be better able to solve these problems than a united one. On the contrary, the most comforting scenario imaginable for a break-up calls for significant deterioration -- not improvement. You don't need a doctorate in economics to figure that out. Simple common sense tells us that the break-up of the country, piled on top of an already fragile economy, would cause our entire standard of living to slump dramatically....

Some have imagined a negotiated parting of the ways, arrived at quickly, amicably, in a spirit of give and take. I for one think this is complete nonsense.



We would be talking about compromises and concessions on all sides that would cause far more anguish than those necessary to avoid a break-up in the first place! Think about that, and beware of those peddling this vision of the amiable divorce -- at best they are dangerously naive, at worst they are deliberately lulling us into a false sense of security.

In my view, the impact would be harsh and we would all feel it acutely.

And the individuals and provinces that are disadvantaged now would feel it most....

I did not consciously come here to depress you, but as I said at the outset, it is hard to give a speech today that is not serious. For these are dangerous times, and no issue is more critical than the future of our country. Because on the survival of Canada hangs the better life that I am convinced awaits us all. Only remember this: we have a stake in each other's prosperity, we have a stake in shared stability -- quite simply, we have a stake in each other's lives.



GUY SAINT-PIERRE

*... le Canada -- vers un pays plus souple,
plus dynamique et plus efficace*

(Le Cercle canadien de Montréal, le 12 novembre 1991, Montreal Quebec)

Mais comme nous le rappelle me le Ministre Joe Clark dans une allocution à Saint-Jean, Nouveau-Brunswick le 30 septembre dernier, et je cite: «La prospérité n'est cependant pas chose automatique. Des générations de Canadiens ont trimé dur pour que nous en arrivions là. Les Canadiens ont dû s'adapter, avoir un esprit novateur, savoir être prévoyants. Ce sont là des attributs indispensables en ce moment. Il nous incombe effectivement de répéter les prouesses des pères de la confédération». Fin de la citation.

Le débat actuel offre aux Québécois et aux Canadiens une occasion unique de repenser la

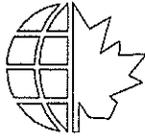
fédération canadienne pour la rendre plus souple, plus dynamique, plus efficace en cette période où les véritables enjeux quant à notre avenir collectif sont de nature économique. Aucun pays, aucun peuple ne peut assurer son progrès social et son épanouissement culturel sans prospérité économique.

La création d'emplois stables et rémunérateurs découle d'une croissance durable, et la qualité de vie exige des investissements considérables dans des services sociaux valables et des mesures efficaces de protection de l'environnement.



Vous vous demanderez peut-être pourquoi la communauté des affaires doit s'impliquer activement dans le débat constitutionnel. La réponse est facile. Nos concitoyens nous le demandent puisqu'ils ont plus confiance aux gens d'affaires qu'à tout autre groupe dans une proportion de 3 à 1 pour leur expliquer les enjeux. Cette grande confiance de la population vis-à-vis les dirigeants de ses entreprises mérite donc une participation de leur part dans le débat. Je crois aussi que nous sommes plus éveillés que tout autre groupe à la globalisation des marchés et des mutations profondes qu'elle provoque dans son sillage dans l'économie de tous les pays.

Les profits de nos entreprises, le rendement de nos actionnaires, les augmentations de salaires de nos employés et notre habilité à investir et à créer des emplois seront tributaires des choix politiques que feront les Canadiens. Comme nous le rappelait Alan Taylor lors de la dernière réunion annuelle des actionnaires de la Banque Royale, et je cite: «La prospérité économique et l'unité nationale sont deux éléments indissociables qui ne peuvent exister par eux-mêmes. La prospérité est un gage d'unité, tout comme l'unité est source de prospérité.» Fin de la citation.



ARTHUR V. MAURO
*... on Canadian's strength of will and dedication to
nation building*

(An Address to the Empire Club, September 26, 1991,
Toronto, Ontario)

We are in danger of becoming a nation of whiners, constantly blaming others for our failure. Virtually every day we see another addition to our litany of complaints. We are against constitutional change, we are against the GST, we are against high interest rates, and we are against free trade. We are against a high Canadian dollar. But, when will someone speak out for what we stand for as well as what we are against? Where is the asset side of this balance sheet? The list of blessings that we enjoy as citizens of the country. When will we begin to acknowledge the freedom, the opportunity, the social benefits, the incredible achievements of a

young country with a diverse and dispersed population?

We have created here in Canada something unique. Perhaps we lack emotion in the expression of our patriotism, but there is no less a love for this land and the quality of life that it has provided.

It is imperative that we Canadians begin the process of re-assessing our national core values. The failure of Meech Lake and the new constitutional proposals must be viewed as an opportunity to re-define the fundamental aspirations of our people and put in place the political structures to achieve these goals....



We must reject out of hand both those in Quebec who say that Quebec can go it alone, and those in the rest of Canada who say let them go. This is the counsel of despair. It can lead only to economic uncertainty and political turmoil.

We should make it clear that the creation of Canada in 1867 was not a term contract. It was not a treaty between nations. The British North America Act of 1867 took 4 separate provinces -- colonies of Great Britain -- and created a new nation and no part of that nation can unilaterally secede.

The existing Constitution is a dynamic instrument not frozen in time. It provides the flexibility to adapt current political and economic structures to meet the just demand of the provinces. Let us discuss intelligently this question of provincial sovereignty.

But, let us define what we mean by sovereignty. Our Constitution, for example, provided exclusive jurisdiction for the provinces in specific areas such as education and health. In the case of Quebec, special status was granted to its language and its civil law. There is no difficulty in providing a constitutional framework within which a province can exercise the sovereignty granted to it under our Constitution. But the role of a strong central government in defining national goals and national policies remains essential...

The future will present difficulties. But, these are the same difficulties Canadians have faced and overcome many times in the past. This land we call Canada remains strong -- but do we the people have the strength of will and the dedication to nation building that this country and its



youth have the right to expect? I think we do, and it is on that basis that I am certain that a united Canada will prevail and that this noble achievement in nation building will be sustained.

BERTIN F. NADEAU
... Un Canada pour qui?

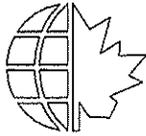
(Déjeuner-causerie de la Chambre de commerce de Calgary, Alberta,
le 5 septembre 1991.)

Si importante soit la question de la compétitivité canadienne, nous ne pouvons pas ignorer les épineuses questions d'équilibre régional, d'équilibre ethnique, d'équilibre culturel, questions qui sont si délicates dans notre pays. Il n'y a pas de solution magique à ces problèmes. Je pense d'ailleurs que nous ne devons pas tant chercher à les résoudre, mais bien à s'en accommoder. Notre attitude face à ces problèmes doit se fonder sur le

réalisme, plutôt que sur l'idéologie ou le fantasme.

À titre d'exemple, l'épineuse question du statut du Québec et du statut du français au Canada. De nombreux Canadiens, tant au Québec qu'ailleurs, voudraient que le fait français au Canada se confine aux frontières du Québec.

Mais ce souhait procède de l'idéologie, pas de la réalité. La réalité, c'est qu'il y a au Canada



six millions et demi de personnes qui parlent, travaillent, créent, rêvent, jouent et font l'amour en français. C'est plus que les populations de Colombie-Britannique, d'Alberta et de Saskatchewan réunies. De ces six millions et demi de francophones, près d'un million vivent à l'extérieur du Québec et tiennent à rester liés à la réalité franco-canadienne. Des vingt million de personnes parlent l'anglais au Canada, près d'un million habitent le Québec et tiennent à demeurer liés à la réalité anglo-canadienne. Ce n'est pas de l'idéologie -- ce n'est même pas de l'histoire. C'est la réalité d'aujourd'hui.

Certes, cette réalité est source de tensions. Mais n'est-il pas aussi vrai que la coexistence des cultures française et anglaise a protégé tous les Canadiens de l'assimilation culturelle américaine? Pour les

francophones d'Amérique, l'appartenance à un pays de vingt-six millions d'habitants, qui reconnaît et promeut leur langue et leur culture constitue un puissant outil de survie. Pour les anglophones du Canada, le problème est différent, puisque leur langue n'est pas menacée. Mais n'est-il pas vrai que la présence et la vitalité du Canada français ont contribué pour beaucoup au façonnement et à l'essor d'une culture canadienne distinctive?

En outre, face à la globalisation et à l'interdépendance toujours plus grande des nations, un pays ne bénéficie-t-il pas d'un avantage lorsqu'il fait partie non pas d'un, mais de deux des grands groupes linguistiques et culturels au monde? Le bilinguisme n'est-il pas une occasion pour chacun de s'enrichir, d'élargir ses horizons



et d'accroître le nombre de ses options?

Je ne prétends pas que chaque Canadien doit apprendre les deux langues officielles du Canada. À l'évidence, la connaissance du français est moins nécessaire ici qu'au Québec -- et il est aussi vrai qu'on peut bien vivre à Chicoutimi sans connaître l'anglais. Mais l'important est qu'un francophone comme moi

puisse le demeurer tout en se sentant canadien à part entière. Comme il est important qu'un canadien anglophone sente qu'il peut le demeurer partout au Canada.