

required the electorate to leave the business of government to the administration unless, of course, something ghastly happened.

This is no longer the case in our society. For some time now we have been passing through a difficult and often confusing period of searching for a new kind of contract between the government and the governed. I suggest to you that there are two main reasons for this. First, the communications explosion has produced an electorate that has immediate and easy access to more information about public affairs than anyone can possibly absorb. Secondly, there is a growing disenchantment in Canada and elsewhere with the new society ushered in by the technological revolution.

We talk of a communications explosion. If there was an explosion it had a long fuse. It was the culmination of a long process that started with universal education and a high literacy rate, moved through the era of the penny newspaper and penny postal rate, of the electric telegraph and radio into the present day of television and world-wide instantaneous communications.

The business of Government is now carried out in the full glare of publicity. Contrast, if you like, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 which drew the map of Europe that was to last for a century with the General Assembly of the United Nations. Only a tiny proportion of the population of Europe even knew that the Congress of Vienna was taking place. Millions whose lives would be affected by its outcome had no inkling of its deliberations and no true representation in them. And it isn't necessary to go back that far. The statesmen at Versailles in 1919 redrew the map of Europe without much, if any, consideration of the views of whole peoples. Harold Nicolson, a British diplomat who took part in the Peace Conference reports the feeling of unease he had when he realized that Lloyd George, Clémenceau and Wilson were happily setting up the state of Yugoslavia without any basic knowledge or understanding of where it was or what kind of people were living there.

Access to abundant if not always totally reliable information about public affairs has profoundly changed Canadians' expectations of their governments. Accountability is now demanded on a day-to-day basis, not only at election time. Consultation with the people is now expected on a continuing basis. Above all, people are demanding the right to be heard. None of this is very surprising, it should be