

CANADIANS DISPLAY AN OBVIOUS AMBIVALENCE WHEN, ALTHOUGH TAKING A JUSTIFIABLE PRIDE IN THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, THEY OFTEN SEE THESE AS HAVING COME ABOUT DESPITE CONFEDERATION, RATHER THAN BECAUSE OF IT. FURTHERMORE, THIS ATTITUDE IS COMMON TO BOTH WEAK AND STRONG REGIONS. WEAKNESS BRINGS CLAIMS THAT CONFEDERATION PERPETUATES DISPARITIES; STRENGTH BREEDS THE CONFIDENCE THAT REDUCES RELIANCE ON THE CENTRE.

NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

YET, MOST CANADIANS, INCLUDING THE MAJORITY OF FRANCOPHONES, DISPLAY A KEEN SENSE OF NATIONHOOD AND AN IMPLICIT AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE PROPER EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INTERESTS THROUGH THE CONSTANT RENEWAL OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE BASIC IDEA OF CANADA.

THE GENIUS OF CONFEDERATION HAS BEEN ITS ACCEPTANCE OF THE RESPECTABILITY OF COMPROMISE. OUR FEDERALISM HAS BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE A REMARKABLY WIDE RANGE OF OFTEN CHANGING, DISPARATE ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND INTERESTS WHILE MAINTAINING THE ROUGH COMPARABILITY OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES REQUIRED FOR NATIONAL COHESION.