

Part of the purpose is education. We sometimes speak of the global village as though someone else lived there, yet we Canadians are at the heart of affairs that once could be called foreign. The land, the territory between the two super-powers, is ours. That is the territory that would be traversed by weapons in the unthinkable event of world conflict. Subsidies in Denmark affect the market of ranchers in High River, Alberta. A debt crisis in Mexico costs Canada customers, costs Canadians jobs. Sulphur emissions in Ohio help kill our lakes.

International policy is everybody's business. And I hope that our public hearings will help Canadians understand just how inter-connected our economic and political future is with that of every other continent and country.

But I confess to two other reasons why I have pressed for this kind of review. One has to do with Parliament which will conduct the inquiry and make the report and in the process help assert the authority of our most important public institution. The second reason is to tap and renew the tradition of individual Canadian involvement and to bring interested citizens directly into forming Canadian public policy.

Naturally, the committee will welcome representations from the formal interest groups that have grown up in international affairs, but I hope that we might also move beyond interest groups and beyond their programs and draw upon those personal instincts which have led so many private Canadians to become involved in the wider world. I hope that you will not leave your representations to the Bishops or various national Committees, but that local Councils, drawing on local experiences, will also be heard.

This country is so big and so rich, in most senses so new, that most of our history has happened at home. But there has always been a knowledge that we had interests and obligations beyond our border. For one thing, Canadians come from everywhere - unlike almost any other people in the world, Canadians have family connections in literally every corner of the globe. Our soldiers were the first from this continent to debark for two world wars and there has been a steady stream of missionaries, traders, teachers and travellers who have come from Canada to work abroad. The local historian of every town, every village, every settled community can name people, people from home, people from the communities around Edmonton who went to China or to Africa or to South America. That happens so regularly that it has become a characteristic of our country.