



DAWN OF PLENTY

Discovering New Horizons

In 1906, a young Frenchman named Jean Monnet climbed off the train in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the gateway to the vast prairies of western Canada. The 18-year-old Monnet was a sales agent for a French cognac distillery managed by his father. His job was to find out whether Canadian consumers would buy his father's fine, smooth cognac.

An earlier Frenchman, Voltaire, had dismissed Canada as "a few acres of snow", but Monnet was much more impressed with the Canadian frontier. He found a land of hope, optimism, and potential. He discovered many immigrants, recently arrived from Europe, who wanted to build a fresh life in this new world: "Their efforts, their vision of a broader, richer future – that was what we talked about. I soaked myself in these impressions."

After 125 years, Canada remains a nation with fundamental strengths – plentiful resources, an educated population, a spirit of tolerance and an openness to international business.

The young Monnet returned to France and reported on this exciting overseas market, but, in time, he left the cognac business and turned his hand to international statesmanship. In the years after World War II, the idealistic Monnet was the driving force behind the creation of the European

Community. Although Monnet is widely considered "the father of Europe", he never forgot his trip to Canada, which helped inspire his development as an internationalist and world leader.

A Nation with Vast Resources

Jean Monnet would not recognize Canada today. It is still a country of bounteous resources, supporting large industries in mining, forestry, fisheries, and agriculture, but as the 20th century draws to a close, Canada is the world's seventh-largest economy and seventh-largest trading nation, a major manufacturer and industrial innovator.

Canada is a nation of marked contrasts. Its area of almost 10 million square kilometres is only slightly smaller than the entire continent of Europe, but its population of 27 million ranks 31st in the world and is only about a tenth that of its southern neighbour, the United States.

A small population in a large country reinforces the image of vast wheat fields, endless forests, and wind-swept tundra, but, as Monnet found, there is also room for industry to grow and develop. Canada's long distances and open spaces offer relatively inexpensive land, cheap and reliable energy, and secure sources of materials.

Another part of Canada's reality is large urban areas with factories, research and educational facilities, and a skilled workforce. In 1986, about half of Canadians lived in the nation's 68 cities. Almost a third of the population is concentrated in three major urban areas: Toronto, with a