

We know about the changes. The Berlin Wall is down.

There is a hole in the ozone layer.

Babies can be conceived in test-tubes.

Asia is an economic powerhouse.

More nations become more competitive with Canada.

National sovereignty, as we defined it traditionally, gives way every day to larger institutions of international order.

Terrible human tragedies persist - children without food; refugees without countries; zealots turning to hatred and terror.

This is not the world of 1867 when MacDonalld and Cartier had the genius to create our extraordinary confederation. This is not 1905 when the rest of the country had the good sense to let Alberta and Saskatchewan become provinces. It is not 1960 when the Quiet Revolution was born. It is a new world, to which every nation must respond.

And to no nation does that offer more promise than it does to Canada.

Look at what we have done. In a world torn by ethnic confrontation, we have created a tradition of diversity which unites, in a peaceful community, people from every culture and colour and corner of the world. We have built a modern, successful economy. We have very high standards of social justice, and seek to improve them. We are far from perfect, but Canada is, already, what other countries want to be; and we have an extraordinary opportunity to shape the modern world.

But first, we have to want to act as one country at home. That cannot be achieved by an Act of Parliament: it requires an act of will, by the broad community of Canadians. We have to decide whether there is an abiding value to this country; whether our good fortune is worth working for and, if so, how.

Tomorrow is the eighteenth anniversary of my election to Parliament. I have been privileged to work in three of Canada's major political institutions -- a national party, Parliament, and the Government. None of these institutions works as well as it needs to. All must be prepared to reexamine old assumptions, and make real changes. So must other Canadian institutions -- business, unions, the media, the professions, certainly the interest groups.