

rather, Canadians generally reject it, and Americans would do the same if all its implications were explained to them. Then why include it, and not some other intellectual constructs, say, closing the border completely and liquidating American holdings in Canada? Possibly to present a range of options, and a straw man to contrast with Option Three, the preferred way ahead.

By underselling Option One, and setting up Option Two as a diversionary target, Option Three is made to appear more imaginative, intellectually valid, and patriotically Canadian. It calls on Canada "over time [and it "will take time", we are warned] to lessen [and "there are limits", we are warned] . . . the impact of the United States and . . . to strengthen our capacity to advance basic Canadian goals and develop a more confident sense of national identity". But, we are tempted to ask, isn't that what Mr. Sharp and his colleagues have been about in recent years? How does this option differ from what they have been, and are still doing, according to Option One?

Economic tone

But let us assume that Option Three represents a completely new orientation, and assess it accordingly. The changes envisaged are essentially economic in nature. "The basic aim," we are told, "would be . . . to lessen the vulnerability of the Canadian economy to external factors, including, in particular, the impact of the United States." However, "there is no basic change envisaged in Canada's multilateral trade policy", and no "intention to distort our traditional trading patterns". Indeed, "the United States would almost certainly remain Canada's most important market and source of supply by a very large margin".

Then what steps does Mr. Sharp have in mind to disentangle the two economies? He mentions "the concept of countervailing factors", "relative shifts . . . over time", "the judicious use of Canadian sovereignty", "mutually-reinforcing use of various policy instruments", and "trade policy . . . harnessed to . . . an industrial-growth strategy and a policy to deal with aspects of foreign ownership". This is an interesting shopping list of possibilities, but until the vague phrases are translated into specific measures, their effectiveness cannot be evaluated.

Then there is the dilemma of reconciling the objectives of making the Canadian economy "more rational and more efficient", and reducing our trade with our most natural trading partners. Canada

and the United States have not become each other's best customers because of any conscious design but rather because that was the most "rational" and "efficient" relation for both. To turn our backs deliberately on the United States market and "recast the economy" to develop alternative outlets that have far less potential in the foreseeable future, particularly for the manufactured products that Canada wants to sell in greater quantities, makes little economic sense. It may well make a good deal of sense, however, on other grounds, such as the more irrational but equally legitimate desire to ensure a distinct national entity. In presenting Option Three to the Canadian people, Mr. Sharp would have been well advised to explain more forthrightly this fundamental choice, and the costs involved.

Cultural terrain

Mr. Sharp also ventures, somewhat cursorily, onto the terrain of American cultural influence in Canada. He paraphrases John Kenneth Galbraith, Canadian-born economist at Harvard University, to the effect that United States economic influences can be disregarded as long as Canada maintains a distinct culture. What Professor Galbraith actually said was that the battle for Canadian identity had to be fought more on the cultural than on the economic front. Mr. Sharp comments that "many Canadians would disagree with him", and one can only presume he shares that view. This impression is strengthened by two subsequent assertions: that Canadians do not feel as concerned about cultural as about economic domination; and that "the general directions of Canadian policy in the cultural sector have been set and they have been pursued with reasonable success. Perhaps we have already turned the corner".

Both statements raise serious questions. Where is the evidence that Canadians are less concerned about a lack of cultural distinctiveness? And, even if they are, does that mean that the problem is less real? Far from having "turned the corner", it could mean that we have gone so far past it that there is no turning back. It also seems optimistic to assume that the two "prescriptions" at present applied in the cultural sector — regulatory measures and direct support — will offset the asphyxiating effects on Canadian creativity of the massive flow from the South.

In preparing the article, Mr. Sharp and his advisers were evidently uneasily aware that the Americans were watching over their shoulders. It is interspersed with assurances that Option Three is not

Defining differences with Galbraith on the struggle for cultural identity