

**What of the future?**

I want to dwell on this scenario because we have not so far in this century considered our country to be subject to siege from the outside. Certainly we know our vulnerabilities and we hope to manage them. The balance between foreign investment and national control, controversial though it is, is one we live and work with. Our sales of grain are guided by a rough equilibrium of domestic capacity, government enterprise, the open market, and long-term agreements. The export of our natural resources is handled by that comfortably Canadian muddle of private sector, provincial rights and public interest as interpreted by our national government.

But how will all of us, and our policy culture, react when the demands of the world around us not only vastly exceed our capacities, but are placed with increasing pressure or even force? Or when sales of food or paper are transformed from commercial transactions to the fundamental allocation of planetary resources?

This picture of a Canada under siege is distinctly new and different for us. And the first strain will come at the heart of my analysis of our policy culture: it will make it ever more difficult to maintain both our dedication to world order and our self-interest as an independent nation.

Those twin preoccupations, which I hope I have persuaded you are one, would come under extreme pressure. Our dedication to an open international trading system could recede before a network of separate bilateral agreements. We could expect consumer nations to exercise heavy leverage against us and we would have to design national strategies accordingly. The easy pluralism of our society might have to take lessons from those nation-states which behave like corporations – or from those corporations which behave like nation-states.

We would have to envisage much more complex, calculated and well-crafted economic relations with resource customers such as the European Community, the United States and Japan. A significant level of high technology benefits for Canada might have to become a condition for access to our resources. We would have to manage an advanced degree of interdependence with the other industrialized nations in ways which we have only just begun to perceive.

And there is a further element, I believe, in any such scenario of the future, one which would be extremely difficult for our policy culture to absorb. We would by no means be able to count on economic growth, as we know it today, as the driving force of our own or other nations.

Economic growth has, until the present time, been regarded as one of the prime indicators of economic health and well-being. Although challenged by environmentalists and by the advocates of "small is beautiful", economic growth, and the expectation of economic growth, have virtually been regarded as laws of nature. Growth is good – growth is progress.

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