

Problems of this magnitude cannot be wished away. They can be solved, however, by the institutions we have created for our own governance. Those institutions belong to all Canadians, to me as a Quebecer as much as to my fellow citizens from the other provinces. And, because these institutions are democratically structured, because their members are freely elected, they are capable of reflecting changes and of responding to the popular will.

I am confident that we in Canada are well along in the course of devising a society as free of prejudice and fear, as full of understanding and generosity, as respectful of individuality and beauty, as receptive to change and innovation, as exists anywhere. Our nation is the encounter of two of the most important cultures of Western civilization, to which countless other strains are being added.

Most Canadians understand that the rupture of their country would be an aberrant departure from the norms they themselves have set, a crime against humanism; for I am immodest enough to suggest that a failure of this always-varied, often-illustrious Canadian social experiment would create shock waves of disbelief among those all over the world who are committed to the proposition that among man's noblest endeavours are those communities in which persons of diverse origins live, love, work and find mutual benefit.

Canadians are conscious of the effort required of them to maintain in healthy working order not only their own nation but as well the North American neighbourhood in which they flourish. A wholesome relationship with our mutual friend Mexico and a robust partnership with the United States are both, in our eyes, highly desirable. To those we have contributed much energy. And you in this country have reciprocated to the point where our relationship forms a model admired by much of the world -- one moulded from the elements of mutual respect and supported by the vigour of disciplined co-operation.

We have built together one of the world's largest and most efficient transportation and power-generating systems in the form of the St. Lawrence Seaway. We have conceived and established the world's oldest, continuously-functioning, binational arbitral tribunal -- the International Joint Commission. We have joined together in many parts of the world in defence of freedom and in the relief of want. We have created oft-times original techniques of environmental management, of emergency and disaster assistance, of air and sea traffic-control, of movements of people, goods and services -- the latter so successfully that the value of our trade and the volume of visitors back and forth exceeds several times over that of any