

the world. Let us make no mistake, Canada is much greater than the sum of its parts, and we would all be diminished by its demise. A failed Canada would diminish, too, the prospects for the realization of the vision of a more hopeful, sustainable future promised by the Earth Summit. We cannot allow Canada to fail.

But it is important to arouse ourselves from the squabbling and divisiveness reflected in the recent referendum and get on with the job of fashioning the new Canada in the context of the new world that we face. The Swiss confederation has demonstrated over a period of some 700 years how people of diverse cultures and languages can live together within a confederation in which the federal government has somewhat limited powers. The European Economic Community is moving, however haltingly, toward an economic and political union in which national governments of countries that have long zealously guarded their sovereignty and independence and indeed have waged many wars against each other are yielding, in many cases reluctantly, a high degree of sovereignty to what is, in effect, a new level of government.

Now, while neither of these examples offers a model for Canada, they do provide lessons for us. The experience of the European Community demonstrates that the achievement of new constitutional arrangements is difficult, but at the same time the progress made to date has also made it clear that the process of forging these arrangements can be an exciting and a creative one, releasing new economic and political energies. The same can be true for Canada.

Let us not just go back to the old drawing board in a mood of frustration and defeat. Rather, let us open a new chapter in our quest for unity in a spirit of adventure and determination to succeed. Let us use the process of fashioning a new constitution for Canada to set a new standard of nation building that will bequeath to future generations of Canadians a country of which they can be proud, and that will enable Canada to make a distinctive contribution to the development of a more peaceful, secure and sustainable world community. This would be in the tradition of the kind of Canada that O.D. Skelton and his colleagues helped to fashion in an earlier period of our history.