

---

As time has widened the distances between us and our colonial beginnings, as we have added dimensions to our national purpose, as our confidence has grown, the discussions among us about the kind of Canada we want has become more intense and, not surprisingly, on occasion more divisive.

Canadians are almost self-consciously aware of their rare good fortune in a troubled world. Frequently we feel concern, even guilt, over the manner in which we are managing our rich resources. On our half of the North American continent, a wide range of circumstances has contrived to offer us more options than most; we are free to choose, and such choices are often difficult. What is the appropriate balance between a consuming and conserving society, between the thrust towards greater affluence and materialism and the search for a rational "life-style" more in harmony with our surroundings and more respectful of environmental and similar values? On which side should Canada come down in the intensifying debate between the advocates of ever more growth and those who maintain that "small is beautiful"?

For some countries — the majority perhaps — such questions are largely academic. Mistakes compounded over centuries or a sparseness of resources or seemingly intractable poverty virtually dictate the paths they must follow. Not so in Canada. We are increasingly aware that, if we so choose, our first 110 years can be a mere prelude to greatness of a special kind, not built solely on wealth and power but on the conception of a more generous, tolerant and well-balanced society, sensitive to the rights and aspirations of all its people and committed to an understanding and constructive role in the world community. Although Canadians continue to debate these issues, a broadly-based consensus is emerging.

In world affairs, it is one that rejects narrow nationalism while insisting on Canada's right to full economic and political self-determination. For example, the very qualities that we inherited from Britain made it mandatory that we achieve full independence; but, having done so, we are today among the strongest supporters of the Commonwealth and have worked hard to enhance its relevancy and effectiveness. The most recent meeting of Commonwealth leaders demonstrated our commitment once again. Similarly, because ours is a country owing much to our French as well as our British heritage, we are constantly strengthening our relations with the world's French-speaking peoples and particularly, as in the Commonwealth, with developing countries. Canadian aid programs overseas are carefully designed to answer the self-determined needs and aspirations of the most-deprived nations. They are devoid of ideologically self-serving overtones, on the grounds that we cannot impose on others restrictions that we could not accept ourselves. By example, however, Canada has gained considerable acceptance and respect in the Third World and is thus in a position to exert a reasonable and legitimate influence on how this potentially-powerful force will be employed in the shaping of events.

Just as imperialistic pretensions of any kind are wholly foreign to the Canadian character, we cannot accept either any enforced restriction of human rights or any doctrine that serves to perpetuate racial inequalities. The Canadian record at the United Nations and other organizations is one of consistent support for every effort to curb tyranny and oppression and to enhance individual freedoms. No Canadian

---