

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to be in Boston today to address the World Affairs Council and the New England Trade Centre. Coming as I do from Cape Breton, this area is very familiar to me. As you know, the links between the New England states and the Maritimes in Canada go back a long way in the history of our two countries. Let me cite one unusual example to show how strong the ties are. In 1917, Halifax suffered an explosion in the harbour which did terrible damage to life and property in the city. The first relief to reach the city was from Boston - in advance of the arrival of any Canadian assistance. It is something that we have not forgotten.

This northeastern region of the United States has had the longest period of contact with Canada of any region in the United States dating back even beyond the Revolution and the United Empire Loyalists. Both countries have witnessed over time significant movements of people between this region and Eastern Canada. Because of this, you are aware of one of the most fundamental aspects of life in Canada - approximately 27% of our populations speak French as their mother tongue. The importance that Canadians attach to the cultural vitality of the French fact affects the policies we develop and the way we view the rest of the world. One example is Canada's membership in both the Commonwealth and the Agence de Cooperation culturelle et technique, its francophone equivalent. There has been a tendency for Canada to be regarded from abroad as an anglophone country. That misconception is not something that would occur to you in this area. I have noticed that you have recognized your francophone neighbours by placing many signs throughout the area in both English and French. Our policies increasingly reflect Canada's bilingual and multi-cultural nature.

With such ties between us, many of you here today feel, I am sure, very familiar with Canada and the ways of Canadians. I suspect that you may also be wondering about reports of changing attitudes in Canada. Over the past year, I have noticed an increased interest in Canada among people in the United States, particularly in the media - but also in universities. Some of this interest may be because we are not acting as you might have expected us to do. Whatever the reasons, Canadians welcome this interest because we are certain that this contributes to the maintenance of a healthy relationship between Canada and the United States.

The area that I would like to talk to you about, today, concerns Canadian activities to enhance the kind of life enjoyed by Canadians. In addition to concerns about economic growth, the Canadian government has in recent years given high priority to policies that maintain and enhance the quality of life in Canada. Some of these policies do have an impact on our relations with the United States.

Let us look first at the environmental area. An important element to the quality of life is the state of our natural environment. I am referring here not simply to the desirability of having in this place or that a piece of real estate that is still in its natural state and therefore to be visited with