

Some people take the line that there have always been differences between English and French speaking Canadians and that these differences have been overcome whenever they threatened the stability of the country. A little patching here, a minor concession there, has always done the trick. They would have us let the passage of time settle our current problems.

To me such a view is disastrously shortsighted. It ignores obvious facts. It is the precursor of inevitable national disintegration. The time for patching has past. We must look squarely at the changes which have been taking place with breathtaking rapidity in this country and begin to shape Confederation to fit the requirements of the future.

French Canada has made a sudden - and I can say without the slightest hesitation, welcome - appearance in the 20th century. It has at last embraced the revolutionary social and industrial developments which have marked the rest of Canada in the past few decades.

Accompanying these dramatic changes has been a growth of self-confidence. The Quebecer wants to participate fully in the development of his society; he wants to be assured of his place. His sense of community is just as strong as it ever was; his ability to promote the interests of his community has greatly increased.

Some French Canadians are even asking themselves whether they would not be better off alone without the limitations that they must accept in a federal system. Such sentiments may be extreme and unacceptable to the majority of Quebecers but they have deep roots in the French Canadian community. The concern of