

## Introduction

Canada has ten provinces and two territories. They are distinct and have different levels of wealth, education and industrial development. They share a federal government, but each provincial government has considerable autonomy. They were settled by people of widely different origins.

Canada's continuing challenge is to preserve separate identities within a harmonious union. It is difficult in a rapidly-changing continent to maintain a satisfactory balance between the federal and provincial governments. It is a situation familiar to Americans.

Canada's flexible federal structure has encouraged balance and development for more than 110 years, but many Canadians recognize that there is now a need for a fundamental revision of the constitution adjusting the division of powers and finances between the provinces and the Federal Government.

There are basic economic and linguistic facts that explain this desire for change. In the west, British Columbia is cut off from the

rest of Canada by the Rocky Mountains and is drawn naturally in many ways to the United States. Alberta is oil-rich. The economies of Saskatchewan and Manitoba are based more on grain. Ontario and Quebec, in the heartland of Canada, contain 65 per cent of the country's population. Ontario has farms, industries and sprawling urban centres and its own strong concerns. Quebec's pride and aspirations centre on the fact that its population is approximately 80 per cent of French descent. The Atlantic Provinces – New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island – are the least prosperous, and the two northern territories, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, are the least populous.

Canada's two official languages are English and French ; 61 per cent of the population use English as their first language, 26 per cent French and 13 per cent other languages. Eighty per cent of the

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