

unity. That is the basis on which all cultural groups will support and sustain a national purpose. National unity gives to each constituent entity something it would not otherwise possess alone, thus creating a harmonious whole which is greater than merely the sum of its components.

When we speak of Canadian or national unity, we are referring to the political union of Canada under one constitution. That is why it is important to stress that identity and unity are not synonymous. In fact, it would be difficult to imagine a homogeneous Canadian identity. The reality of Canada is that the main common identity is a rich and shared diversity!

The exchange of our cultural values and identities is linked to the dynamic state of culture, a culture in constant evolution. Sharing our identities and values makes each one of us richer in the end.

...the only valid unity is the unity of the mind, rather than the unity of structures. Structures follow people's minds. We have to begin with mutual respect, the desire to listen to one another, and perhaps a common exploration of common values, and if, accidentally, as an afterthought, we decide to organize structures to prop up those values, so much the better. ...the unity of people's minds willingly accepts the existence of different identities, different personalities within a single community. — Keith Spicer, Chairman, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (Issue 15:18).

The embrace and celebration of Canada's diversity would allow us as a nation to attain our optimum cultural creativity, and would sustain our integrity as a unified country, distinctive among the nations of the world.

Recent survey data indicate that 88.5 percent of Canadians polled agree with the statement that, "artists make a major contribution to our society". Similarly, 77.3 percent of Canadians polled believe that "the arts in Canada are important because they are one of the things that help to make us unique and different from other countries". Perhaps more importantly, 91 percent of Canadians surveyed also agree that "it is important to expose children to the arts". Canadians also appreciate exposure to their heritage, with 84.5 percent of those asked feeling that "museums and galleries make a community a better place to live". (Source: Department of Communications, Canadian Arts Consumers Profile, 1991, preliminary data.)

1B. CULTURE: THE SOUL OF SOCIETY

Canada's culture is a reflection of the many facets of its people's taste, its social structure, its daily life, its customs and its development, ...and a reflection of the principal challenges that face the Canadian people as a society. — Pierre DesRoches, Executive Director, Telefilm Canada (Issue 20:5).

The UNESCO definition of culture includes architecture, the arts, crafts, design, heritage, multiculturalism, native culture, parks and recreation, religion, sports and urban design.