

If I were a real expert on what is happening in Canada, I would be a consultant, not a foreign minister. But I have been active in my country over the past two decades, in positions that have required me to keep my eyes open, and I believe we have moved quietly into a new maturity as a nation. We have been a young country for a long time, and, somewhere between Jean Lesage and Marc Garneau, we have become more sure of ourselves. Part of that had to do with a sense of equality in our regional communities. There has been a dramatic evolution of self-confidence in Quebec and, for different reasons, in my own region of Western Canada, and that is bound to influence the people raised there. But quite apart from our geographic and cultural communities, these past few decades have seen a burst in Canadian accomplishment — in literature, science, investment, invention, painting, sport — you name the field. Even our chefs excel. So much so that the Americans are grumbling.

Confidence and accomplishment nourish one another, and I am arguing that we are better able to stand on our own than we have ever been. The modern purpose of Canadian nationalism is to express ourselves, not to protect ourselves.

The real challenge is that the world is getting tougher. A few years ago, in world hockey, Canada learned that we can't take success for granted. That is a lesson that we have to carry out of the rink.

The reality is that we cannot stand still in an increasingly competitive world. The *status quo* will not be good enough. This country was built on the development of its resource base, but the terms of trade have been working against the resource sector and we have been slow to adjust.

We have seen the competition moving fast. Within our lifetime Japan has gone from toys to radios to shipbuilding to cars to high tech. The United States has shifted from the smokestack industries of the northeast to Silicon Valley and the Sunbelt. We've got to be equally quick if we are to maintain the standard of living that Canadians have come to enjoy and come to expect.

We must begin, I believe, by making much better use of the opportunities and the advantages that our geopolitical situation affords us.

Our primary foreign policy challenge is the relationship with the United States. In recent months, 78 per cent of Canadian exports have been to the US market, providing jobs for three million Canadians. The growth alone in our trade with the United States last year exceeded our total trade with Japan. The quality of our air and of our water as we all know is affected by emissions and omissions south of the border. We come under the US defence umbrella. Anne Murray goes to Nashville for her reward.

Naturally, over the years, some Canadians have feared that pervasive American presence. Yet working with the United States can pay handsome dividends. Co-operation led to Canadarm and the technological spinoffs that come with it. It has provided a high level of national security, through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and North American Aerospace Defence. It produced the St. Lawrence Seaway, the Skagit Treaty, and the auto pact.