

do their part to meet the needs and satisfy the aspirations of the people they lead. In the true sense of the word - and I need not labour the point before this audience - the leader is the scapegoat for the people - if they do not like the outcome of the will they have expressed they take out their frustration on the leader that has given it effect.

Canada is what we have made it, all of us. It will be what we want it to be, neither more nor less.

I have said that Canada came into being as an act of political will. It is also true to say that it came into being by way of a political process, a process of clear choices, of negotiation. A number of British colonies in North America, each with its own measure of autonomy perceived their interest to be in the formation of a confederation, the framework for building a nation. The entities that came together in 1867 were far from homogenous in language, culture or economy. To make the Confederation the leaders of the time faced the same dilemma Canada faces today, how to give the central government the essential instruments for nation-building while reserving to what were to become the provinces the necessary powers to safeguard the particular interests of each.

From the beginning Canada has been a plural society, with all the richness and all the difficulties that plurality entails. The constitutional history of Canada has been a process of re-definition of the relationships between the political units, the varying cultural communities and the different interest groups that make up the nation. I suggest to you that this process of re-definition of rights and privileges far from being a sign of weakness in the Canadian unity is lively evidence of its underlying strength and vitality. Canada is not a set-piece, embalmed forever like a fly in amber but a living, pulsating being bearing the scars of old wounds, suffering today as in the past from passing illnesses and injuries but basically strong, resilient and well able to meet the challenges and crises of the present as it has overcome those of the past.

There are many aspects to the Canadian plurality and many approaches to its definition. For my purpose tonight, I will confine myself to three aspects - political, cultural and regional, which is to say economic. The political aspect presents no problems of definition, it can be seen at a glance on the map - one country comprising ten provinces and two territories. We all have some understanding of the way jurisdiction is shared between the federal and provincial governments. The law is set out in the British North America Act and has been interpreted by the courts over the past century -