

ethnic and linguistic factors are of great importance. Our histories have been histories of nation-building in a very real sense. We rely on public debate and a representative democratic process to reconcile differences and to define national objectives.

That process may be tumultuous at times — Canada's recent constitutional debate was not always calm and measured. Its great merit, however, is that it forces governments to respond to the wishes of their people, clearly expressed in public debate.

Has the diversity of our two countries, have our domestic experiences, shaped our approaches to international relations? I believe they have. We have both learned that tolerance, understanding, and accommodation are needed to make our own political systems work. I believe that they are needed in our international relations as well.

One of the classic definitions of foreign policy is "the pursuit of national interest". That does not, of course, answer the question of what is one's national interest. Nor does it define the international environment in which states operate, or how to relate the pursuit of national interest to the international environment.

These are not purely academic questions. They have led to controversy within Canada. For it was under our present Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, that the government of Canada undertook a comprehensive review of foreign policy, in the early Seventies, which declared that foreign policy must derive from national interests. That declaration set off a lively public debate about whether Canada was abandoning the internationalist approach to foreign policy through which Mr. Trudeau's predecessor, Lester Pearson, had earned respect for himself and his country.

Of course, the answer to such criticism must lie in how a nation defines self-interest and how, in doing so, it balances short-term political and economic concerns with less tangible or longer run values and objectives — including the health and vigour of the international environment in which states operate. The desired result is a foreign policy based on what might be called a sense of enlightened self-interest. While none of us would lay claim to a state of perfect enlightenment, I would submit that Canadian foreign policy over the past 15 years has reflected no decline in concern for key international issues or for the strengthening of international co-operation.

We have, of course, had to cope with an increasingly complex and turbulent international environment during those years. That has, in fact, caused us to extend — rather than narrow — the range of our activities abroad.

For Canada, promoting our national interest must inevitably involve many activities and concerns.

— We must be concerned about maintaining crucial bilateral relationships, to the east and west and south of us. Our Prime Minister once remarked that living with our great neighbour to the south was like sleeping with an elephant. It is a positive and profitable but sometimes disturbing experience.