

the society we are and to set aside nostalgia for what we once were - or think we once were. There are hundreds of thousands of Canadians who deride their National Capital without ever having seen the Peace Tower. There are still more who deride Quebecers without having ever stepped inside that province and talked to its citizens. And there are central Canadians - so many of them - who have never wandered west of the Manitoba border as they contemplate yet another trip to Miami, London or New York. It is one thing to disagree with other Canadians. It is another thing to have never met them and to have never known their neighbourhoods.

There is a disturbing feature which pervades our national psych . It is a profound complacency, an attitude which says that the good life we have enjoyed will continue. But there is nothing automatic about our good luck - nothing guaranteed. My family has worked hard in Alberta for three generations, and prospered there. But we did not put the oil in the ground, and no one can guarantee that our children will inherit a kingdom so peacable as that in which we grew up. The world has known other serene communities that came apart when anger and antagonism became gradually contagious. And the world has known economies that were once rich and have become impoverished through complacency and inaction.

It would be a tragedy to let that happen here.

The new clich  is that Canada is a solution looking for a problem. In fact, we have problems, serious in their context, but we also have a remarkable record of success - of solutions.

We have to put an end to Canadian complacency.

We to have to step erecting walls around each other while around the world walls are being torn down each day.

We must look beyond the legal Constitution and focus on how we build a diverse dynamic contemporary nation.

We must start to define ourselves by what we are, and what we can become.

And we must learn to dream again - to set our sights in what this extraordinary country can become in a mould of so much challenge and promise.

The passions and skill that caused Meech Lake to be signed are proof that we care about this extraordinary country. But the anger that debate evoked demonstrates the need to renew a sense of Canadian goals and purpose - to define our national community as we are today, as we can become - diverse, tolerant, talented, respecting ourselves as much as others do.