

Another example is in our approach to Quebec, and its desire to maintain its linguistic and cultural position in North America. The present federal government recognizes the aspirations of the people of Quebec. It recognizes the responsibilities of the Government of Quebec. We want to help the people of Quebec to satisfy, within the framework of the Canadian federation, in every way we can, their desire to maintain and foster their own identity. In those fields which fall within federal responsibility, the government in Ottawa must speak for all Canadians, those from Quebec, from Newfoundland, or from the Territories. But when the people of Quebec express special needs arising from their own heritage and their deep-rooted sense of their own identity, the federal government cannot impose on the Quebec government a standard, or even a point of view, which would unnecessarily hinder their progress and the attainment of their objectives. Our constitution is comprehensive and flexible. If necessary, it is changeable. In domestic affairs as well as in international relations, we recognize the need for innovation. We believe more in co-operation than in confrontation.

In general, then, I would say that our government wishes to restore a climate of confidence with the provinces. We share with them the responsibility for governing Canada.

Mr. President, I don't want to intrude any further on your generosity. I am sure that there are a number of subjects that the distinguished members of the audience will want to discuss. May I thank you for the chance you have given me to say my bit -- perhaps we could now allow others a chance.