

The Print Media

Among Canada's principal communications systems, the network of daily and weekly newspapers plays a strong role in influencing public opinion. Moreover, as opposed to the subtleties and the reservations about editorializing which exist within the broadcasting industry, the newspapers of Canada do not hesitate to express their editorial opinions, and in fact editorial policy is a hallmark of the newspaper business. It is true that every newspaper's publisher and editorial staff is deeply committed to journalistic freedom and integrity in the reporting of the news, and most would claim that they strive successfully for balance in its presentation. What is different and unique about newspapers, however, is that they also feel a strong sense of freedom and responsibility to express their subjective views and opinions on the editorial pages.

On the editorial side of the paper, the editorial boards of the various newspapers in Canada, and this is certainly true of the Citizen, try to provide leadership on one side or other of the question. Sometimes it would appear that some newspapers certainly have been on both sides of the question.

I think it fair to say that the Citizen has been strongly federalist, strongly in favour of the Meech Lake agreement. The only other thing I would add is that we don't know of any practising separatist in our newsroom. — Clark Davey, Publisher, The Ottawa Citizen (Issue 30:6).

The Committee was impressed with the initiative taken by *Maclean's* magazine to create a national forum consisting of 12 Canadians to see if they could agree on a common vision of a united Canada. They produced a detailed blueprint of constitutional changes which they agreed would produce a firmly unified country. The intriguing results were published in the January 6, 1992, edition of *Maclean's*.

The great importance of all forms of communication — broadcasting, cable television, telecommunications, newspapers, magazines and books — to national unity, and the manner in which delivery of the cultural message is intermingled with its creation, was well expressed for us by this witness, among others:

In other words, what makes a country is the process of dialogue and communication and sharing of images, ideas and information.

So how do we go about sewing Canada back together? How do we heal the wounds and try to inspire a sense of place and belonging that seems to be missing? How do we go about re-making our relationship with the people of Quebec and with the native people in this country? We can do that only if we understand, in this responsibility to each other, that the first and most important thing we have to do is to get to know each other. We have to talk to each other. We have to like each other. We have to enjoy and appreciate our differences.