

responsible states on the world scene and one of the best models — with all its flaws — for tolerant pluralism in a world which needs such models now much more than even a year ago.

It is noteworthy though, that the principal protagonists in the Canadian debate have not made the international stakes a primary point in their arguments. Certainly, those who are most critical of Canadian structures do not criticize foreign policy very much. They are forced to admit that most Canadians recognize, on balance, that their interests and values have been well served internationally in the half century or so since Canada evolved as an autonomous actor on the world stage.⁴ On the other hand, defenders of Canadian federalism (with varying degrees of renewal or renovation) seem to think, in line with most traditional political scientists and opinion researchers, that international issues are not as influential with voters and citizens as are the “bread and butter” concerns of economics at the local and national levels. Thus federalists have not emphasized the honourable and successful Canadian record in the world, apparently in the belief that it will not be especially persuasive in the debate at home.

In one of the most interdependent countries in an increasingly interdependent world, however, “bread and butter” concerns of the economy and social welfare cannot be managed at the local or national level. It is true that most citizens are frustrated by the difficulty they feel in influencing, or even in fully comprehending, the global economic forces which shape their lives, and in Canada as elsewhere, spasms of self-assertion by national, regional, ethnic, and local groups partly reflect an impulse to resist or attempt to counter-balance this integration.

We should not automatically accept the conventional wisdom that “bread and butter” issues of personal prosperity and welfare will overwhelmingly shape one’s political decisions. Both in the present and the past record of humanity, there is ample evidence that people can be moved as much by their values as by their material interests, and by emotional drives as much as by rational calculations.

We are entering a year when Canadians in all parts of the country will be called upon to make up their own minds, perhaps finally, on whether a Canadian state in recognizable form should continue to exist, and, if so, how it will be re-shaped and how it will function in the future. To contribute to the stock-taking by individual Canadians it may be useful to try to anticipate the international needs, pressures, and opportunities that