

agenda for nation building:

Liberal leadership for
the 21st century

michael ignatieff

1.

In the last six months, I have spent a lot of time listening to Canadians, at first on doorsteps in my riding of Etobicoke Lakeshore and then as a candidate for the leadership of the Liberal Party. At every kind of venue, from a gathering of Sikh raspberry farmers in Abbotsford, British Columbia to the Red Oak lobster dinner in Summerside, Prince Edward Island, I've listened to Liberals talk about the direction they want their country to take. My education has continued over eggs and coffee in Timmins, steak sandwiches in Whitehorse, small gatherings in Eastern Quebec, the Hays Breakfast at the Calgary Stampede, meetings with Aboriginal leaders in Thunder Bay, and late evening beers with Newfoundlanders in the Crows Nest bar in St. John's.

As I listened, I began to understand more deeply the dreams that our Party must serve. I've been a Liberal since I was 17—campaigning for Mike Pearson in 1965 and served as a national youth organizer for Pierre

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Trudeau in 1968—and the ideals reaffirmed across the country have strengthened convictions I have held all my life.

The result is this document, written by one Liberal for the sake of his fellow Liberals across the country, setting out the ideas I will fight for as a candidate for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada. I have tried to be

to lead is to choose.

faithful to what I learned on the road, as a candidate for a great office. The ideas are

ambitious, but now is the time for ambition if we are to accomplish great things.

the Canadian achievement

To lead is to choose. To choose is to decide priorities based on available resources. Leaders are defined by their priorities. My first priority is to protect the achievements that make us proud to be Canadian.

In less than 140 years, Canada has transformed itself from a union of founding peoples—anglophone, franco-phone and Aboriginal—into a society that embraces the full diversity of our planet. Together, we have struggled to achieve equality of citizenship for all. We have maintained our independence beside the most powerful nation in the world and we have preserved our unity as a people.

This achievement is a cause for celebration. If I could do anything as leader of our party—and then our country—it would be to defend our accomplishments and strengthen our love for our country.

The Canadian achievement matters to us, and it matters to the world. The most important challenge the world faces today is not religious, ideological or economic. It is political: to establish and sustain free government among peoples of different religion, race, culture, ethnicity and language. With the benefit of free government, all global problems can be managed, even if they cannot always be solved. Without the benefits of free government, we cannot create the peace and prosperity that make solutions possible. This is where Canada has shown the way, by demonstrating that peoples of different languages, faiths and traditions can reconcile their differences and work together to strengthen the common framework of free government.

Free government means institutions that balance majority interests and minority rights. Our constitution protects the language rights of minorities and recognizes the rights of Aboriginal peoples and their aspirations to self-government. Thanks to our open immigration policy and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canada offers a safe home to all who are freedom-loving and law-abiding. Because of sound institutions we live as equals, we live in

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freedom, and we respect our differences. This is no mean feat. We are no mean country.

Building on these foundations, Canadians have created a distinctively progressive political culture in North America. We believe in universal rights of access to publicly funded health care; we believe in the protection of group rights to language; in group rights to self-determination for First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples; we believe in the equality rights of all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, including rights to marriage. Strong majorities of Canadians believe that while abortion should be rare, it should be a protected right for all women. In addition, Canadians do not support capital punishment and we do

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not believe in a constitutionally protected right to bear arms. We also maintain that human freedom is best protected in a market economy

where risk-taking is rewarded, taxes are kept competitive, workers' rights are protected, and the public finances are managed prudently to avoid burdening future generations with debt. We believe, finally, that we are stewards of our land, air and water and have an obligation to hand these treasures on to the next generation redeemed and renewed.

I am in politics to defend and develop this progressive achievement.

Many strands contributed to Canadian progressivism: Prairie radicalism, the CCF and NDP, the women's movement and red Toryism. But the dominant strand has been the Liberal tradition that descends from Wilfrid Laurier. I draw my deepest convictions from its enduring achievements: sustaining a spine of equal citizenship for all Canadians, promoting prosperity for all our people and providing farsighted international leadership.

It is not surprising that the newly minted Conservative Party decided to drop the word 'Progressive' from its name. Canadian politics now offers a clear choice between the progressive traditions of the Liberal Party and a conservative dogma, suspicious of the enabling capacity of government itself and hostile to the egalitarian beliefs of the progressive tradition. In taking this approach, the Conservatives have parted company with the common sense of their own people.

In January 2006, Canadians did vote for change but they did not vote to move Canada to the right. They did not vote to abandon our progressive tradition.

In the next election, the Liberal Party needs to speak with a strong, united and progressive voice. But Liberals should also be bold, unafraid to identify the problems we must tackle and courageous in the solutions we propose.

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nation building for the 21st century

To be bold, Liberals need to draw inspiration from our history. Our best Liberal leaders have not just been party leaders. They have been nation builders. Wilfrid Laurier opened Canada to mass immigration, built the second national railway, created the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta and began Canada's emancipation from the British Empire and our emergence as a fully independent state.

It is time for Liberals to become nation-builders again. The country does not want to be administered. It wants to be led. It doesn't want to be divided, it wants to be united.

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The country has not lost faith with its traditions of progressive government. It wants these traditions renewed for the 21st century.

A national project worthy of our best efforts must be comprehensive. It should address all Canadians, our entrepreneurs and business leaders, our Aboriginal peoples, our new immigrants, our farmers and fishermen, and our urban and rural poor. It should offer our federal government a co-ordinating goal and purpose. Above all else, our Liberal vision should bring us together as a people. Right now, we are less than the sum of our parts. We want to become more.

A nation-building agenda must have four basic priorities:

Strengthening a sustainable economy;

Strengthening the spine of our citizenship;

Strengthening our unity as a people; and

Strengthening our place in the world.



● strengthening
a sustainable
economy.

We cannot become more equal or more just unless we make ourselves more productive. We cannot reduce child poverty, gaps in Aboriginal health and education, clean up our lakes and rivers, generate jobs in Canada's regions, unless we create more wealth by making our economy more competitive. Greater wealth alone, of course, will not solve our problems. We need wise policy to channel our surplus to social purposes, but without greater wealth, we have no chance of making ourselves a fairer and more decent society.

Right now, our prosperity conceals some worrying signs of weakness. The rising dollar has eroded our competitive

advantage and exposed our failure to invest in new technologies.

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November 2002.ⁱ We need to diversify and become less dependent on resource revenues. Forestry, mineral and energy commodities made up 71% of British Columbia's total exports in 1995 and 64.2% of Alberta's.ⁱⁱ Instead of turning these resources into high-value products, we forfeit these

rewards to our competitors. We do not have enough global market share in key emerging economies like India and China. The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada has reported that Canada's global market share (currently 3.4% of global trade) is low throughout Asia, and worryingly small in China at 1.31% and India at 0.74%.ⁱⁱⁱ

Canadian productivity—and hence our standard of living—lags behind our competitors. Canada's GDP per capita in 2004 was \$8,700

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— a full 18% lower than the GDP per capita in the United States.^{iv} Canadian employers spend a

significantly lower share of payroll dollars on training (1.55% in 2003) than employers in the United States.^v Studies show that Canadian firms are not investing enough in new product lines based on the latest scientific or technical knowledge.^{vi}

Improving productivity is the business of business. But government, especially the federal government,

a national prosperity strategy that addresses the long-term productivity challenges facing our economy.

has unrivalled instruments—fiscal and monetary policy, investment strategies, capacities of

co-ordination and the ability to create national infrastructure—to help Canadians to make their economic performance world-class. We need to put all of these instruments together in a national prosperity strategy that addresses the long-term productivity challenges facing our economy.

the national economic union

The first element in a national prosperity strategy is to

strengthen Canada as a single economic market. At present, the national economy is fragmented, with substantial barriers to labour and capital mobility between provinces. A recent agreement between Alberta and British Columbia is leading the way in reducing some of these barriers, but regulatory, tariff and infrastructure obstacles continue to divide Canadian regions. Even the social benefits Canadians like to think of as national are less portable than they should be: it takes far too much time, for example, for Canadian moving from one province to another to receive a new provincial health card which is necessary for access to health services.

These weaknesses in our national economy not only reduce our economic performance. They also aggravate political tensions between regions.

The federal government should convene regular meetings of first ministers on the national economic union to work together to reduce barriers to inter-provincial labour and capital and to undertake the investments in infrastructure—like energy corridors between provinces and gateway development in our Atlantic and Pacific ports—to improve the efficiency of the national economy.

In addition to working with the provinces to strengthen the economic union, the federal government should get all of its departments and agencies—Finance, National Revenue, Industry, Environment, Natural Resources, Transport, Service Canada—working together on a common strategy to boost Canadian economic performance.

This strategy should focus on six basic tasks:

- (1) maintaining fiscal discipline in government itself, so that it does not run up deficits and so that it continues to pay down the national debt;
- (2) maintaining the competitive advantage of Canada as a location for business, by eliminating burdensome regulations and by keeping taxes low;
- (3) developing partnerships with universities and the private sector to promote research and innovation in basic science and applied technologies so that Canada leads in

the fields where the emerging economic opportunities lie; (4) offering further incentives to business to reward investment in education, training, new plants and machinery, especially technologies that cut pollution and carbon emissions; (5) promoting Canadian products, especially in the new markets of Asia and battling for fairer conditions of trade; and (6) investing in national infrastructure—the Atlantic and Pacific gateways, the Trans Canada Highway, the major border crossings—to improve the efficiency of the national economy.

education and prosperity

Education is freedom. It allows Canadians to create opportunity and hope, to make themselves artists of their own lives. A staggering nine million working-age people, or 42% of Canadians, have literacy skills below the level considered necessary to function in society.^{vii} Employers, both small and large, should be given tax incentives to take on apprentices and improve their skills. Working with the provinces, federal funds should be channeled to institutions that offer immigrants the chance to upgrade their language and technical abilities. The federal government should also work with the provinces to eliminate all remaining barriers—of income and family circumstance—to post-secondary education, especially for Aboriginal Canadians, new immigrants, visible minorities, people with disabilities and Canadians living outside large urban centres. The federal

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g o v e r n m e n t
should consolidate and simplify
all its federal student assistance programs—
Canada Student

Loans, Millennium Scholarships, Canada Access Grants—into a single Canada Student Assistance Program which has a consistent needs-based approach and a fixed,

long-term low interest repayment scheme. Such a program has to be designed to protect students against crushing debt loads that can hold back success.

In order to channel its education investments more effectively,

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the federal government should separate out its education transfer from its health and social transfers and calculate some portion of the education transfer on a per-student basis to reward those provinces' institutions that attract the best and the brightest from across the country and around the world. Separating out the education transfer would enable the federal government to define its educational priorities more clearly and to work with the provinces to improve literacy, numeracy and technological skills and also to reduce the significant disparities that exist in higher education funding among provinces.

re-investing in Canada's regions

The great undiscussed national unity issue in Canada is the growing disparity between urban and rural and between our metropolitan areas and our regions. We do not want a Canada where all the hope and opportunity are concentrated in Canada's cities. We do not want any region of our country, north or south, east or west to be left behind.

Improving education in Canada's regions is the key to economic development outside Canada's major metropolitan areas. Atlantic Canada's fine universities

improving educational opportunities in Canada's regions and in the north is crucial if young professionals are to remain where they grew up and to create new opportunities for their children.

have become growth poles for economic opportunity in the Maritimes. Lakehead University in Thunder Bay and the University of New Brunswick are both creating medical schools to train doctors and nurses to work in rural areas. Improving educational opportunities in Canada's regions and in the north is crucial if young professionals are to remain where they grew up and to create new opportunities for their children.

The rural caucus of the Liberal Party has proposed a dedicated rural economic development fund aimed at small business and a rural infrastructure investment fund. In addition, our regions need to develop new partnerships between the agriculture and natural resource sectors and local universities to create new products in the biofuel and

a national food policy creates the framework for concerted federal leadership to sustain our agricultural sector and preserve Canada's role as a world food leader.

bio-pharmaceuticals areas. Besides helping our farmers find new products and new uses for their land, we need to strengthen our supply management

systems and our income security for the farming population, faced as it is with heavily subsidized production from our competitors.

The federal government needs a national food policy, to bring consumers, producers and processors together to co-ordinate government strategies for reviving Canada's ocean regions and our agricultural sector. The key objectives of a food policy would be to (a) ensure a competitive and sustainable agricultural industry, (b) increase the market share of Canadian food consumption provided by Canadian producers, (c) increase the amount of food processing in Canada, (d) invest in research in new crops and products, (e) ensure the continued safety of our food supply, (f) reduce environmentally harmful practices in Canadian

food production, (g) harmonize and simplify regulations and standards, (h) improve Canada's food export performance, (i) increase Canada's contribution to international food security, and (j) work with our international partners to create fairer conditions for international trade in food.

A national food policy would create the framework necessary to sustain our agricultural sector and preserve Canada's role as a world food leader.

In developing policy to arrest the de-population of Canada's

rural regeneration should begin from the grassroots.

regions, the Liberal Party should stand up against the naysayers who maintain that jobs and economic opportunities are flowing away from the regions to Canada's metropolitan centres and that there is nothing we can do about it. In saying this, the naysayers are writing off most of the people who live in Canada's regions. It cannot be good, either for the quality of urban life or our environment, to have the Canadian population concentrated in sprawling metropolitan zones, with emptiness in between. Small towns and rural communities should be given the chance to flourish along with metropolitan centres. Rural regeneration should begin from the grassroots. Small communities themselves should gather stakeholders together to create

development plans that sustain local employment

we have to find a way to sustain our prosperity without damaging the environment and the global climate system.

and growth. Once these regional plans are in place, the federal and provincial governments should be ready to contribute as development partners.

prosperity and sustainability

A world-class economy for Canada must be sustainable. We depend for our prosperity in part on our natural

resources, and we know that there are powerful rewards for any country that takes a lead in developing environmentally sustainable products and energy systems. We have to find a way to sustain our prosperity without damaging the environment and the global climate system. In fact, it is no longer enough to pursue incremental reductions in pollution—we must find ways to ensure our economy restores our natural systems rather than degrades them.

Pollution does not care about national or provincial boundaries. Climate change is a global phenomenon and makes nonsense of the ‘Made in Canada’ rhetoric of the Conservative government. We need to stay committed to Kyoto, but we also need to go beyond Kyoto if we are to prevent disaster.

In no area of government policy is tough leadership more necessary than in the environment. While much progress has been made, through Project Green and other federal initiatives, it is no longer enough to rely on voluntary initiatives and subsidies to drive reductions in harm-

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ful emissions. A free-market dictates that pollution will continue to rise unless it is reflected in the

cost of doing business. We need to shift to policies that provide strong financial and regulatory constraints to prevent the use of our environment as a free garbage dump.

But these regulations need to be fair. It makes no sense to target the Alberta energy sector alone, for example,

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if it contributes 25% of Canadian greenhouse gas emissions, while the transportation sector also contributes 25%.^{viii} A balanced set

of regulations must apply to all emitters and polluters, on the principle of polluter pays.

Environmental and energy policy are always national unity issues in Canada and regulations need to be framed so that they do not pit one region of the country against another.

Finally, good environmental policy needs to be implemented gradually in step with the normal rate of new investment. Sound policy needs to understand the international context in which businesses operate. We need to show the world environmental leadership without jeopardizing our international competitiveness. The Liberal National Energy Policy of the 1980's failed to understand this.

Working in partnership with the provinces and all stakeholders, the federal government should take the lead in strengthening the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and developing a national sustainable development strategy, which would include at least these priorities:

- (1) strengthening the Clean Air Agenda with higher emission standards for all vehicles sold in Canada;
- (2) developing a national water strategy to improve existing water quality legislation, address long-term sustainability of our fresh water supply, and commit new investment to clean up the Great Lakes watershed from Lake Superior to the Grand Banks, together with Lake Winnipeg and other watershed systems of national importance;
- (3) increasing the protection of Canada's unique ecosystems from development by enlarging the national and provincial parks system from 9 to 12 % of Canadian territory;
- (4) investing in low emission public transportation for our metropolitan areas; and
- (5) developing, in partnership with all stakeholders including industry, a comprehensive climate change plan with a minimum objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2050, with interim targets, and which would include as a minimum:
 - (a) setting a declining absolute cap on aggregate greenhouse gas emissions targets for Canada's large final emitters, the oil and gas, thermal electricity, mining and manufacturing sectors, which allow trading to meet targets at lowest overall cost, and requires industry to buy permits for emissions over and above their permitted amount,

15.

- (b) increasing federal incentives to business for environmental reclamation and efficient energy use and the promotion of renewable energy generation,
- (c) requiring auto manufacturers to increase market share for low, ultra-low, and zero emissions vehicles,
- (d) using federal purchasing power to set the standard for consumption by government of clean, low-impact energy, recycled products and fuel-efficient vehicles, and
- (e) committing federal funds to research in carbon sequestration and the development of a national pipeline system to transmit the gas from industry producers to industrial consumers.

Beyond these specific measures, the federal government should begin now to shift taxation away from profits, revenue and income towards pollution behavior by all producers and consumers. For example, we should restructure excise tax and GST paid at the pump to gradually lower taxes on low-carbon fuel, and gradually raise taxes on

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higher carbon fuel to create a market incentive to use and demand the supply of greener fuel.

Pollution and carbon taxes are complex instruments: they must be fair, non-discriminatory and they must be effective. Accordingly, they can only be implemented when they can meet these tests. But the principle is sound: the more you pollute, the more tax you pay. Applied in a revenue-neutral way that ensures that the tax revenue collected in excess of the related tax cuts is recycled back to the province it originated from, and in a non-discriminatory fashion, such a new tax system might become a key instrument that the federal government can use to move Canada towards an economic future that is sustainable. Environmental leadership is a key priority for a progressive Liberal agenda in the 21st century.



strengthening the spine of citizenship.

Canada is more than an economic union, more than a set of provincial economies strung out along the 49th parallel. It is a civic experiment, an attempt

to bind diverse peoples together in equality of citizenship. Successive Liberal governments can take pride in strengthening this spine of citizenship, not only by enacting the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but also in creating the great Liberal social programs, from the Canada Pension Plan to Medicare. Thanks to these achievements, our citizenship expresses the ideal that all Canadians should stand equal before the trials of life and that all Canadians should benefit equally from life's opportunities.

Equal citizenship is also an economic necessity. Making our economy more productive requires Canada to be more just. We cannot be efficient and prosperous if Canadians continue to be poorly housed, badly educated and in ill health. Three groups of citizens need particular help: Aboriginal peoples, low-income working families with children, and visible minority immigrants.

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Aboriginal Canadians

In November 2005, Paul Martin's government committed more than 5 billion dollars over five years at Kelowna to reduce unacceptable gaps in Aboriginal health, education and housing. The Kelowna Accord was an unparalleled national consensus amongst the federal government, provinces, territories and Aboriginal peoples to work together in order to achieve common goals. The Conservative government has abandoned these commitments. This tells Canadians where the government stands on justice towards Aboriginal peoples, but also where they stand on the role

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of government in improving economic opportunity for all Canadians.

A future Liberal government must return to the original Kelowna agreement and meet it in full. But it must go beyond Kelowna. Aboriginals should thrive in this great country: their lands are rich in resources; their young workforce is full of energy and possibilities; a new generation of aboriginal leaders is seizing the opportunity to use economic development to advance their peoples' interests. Many Aboriginal communities are becoming partners in the economic prosperity that is happening around them, rather than just watching from the sidelines. More and more land and power is being transferred back to Aboriginal communities.

Increasingly, Aboriginal peoples are ceasing to be wards of the federal government and are becoming masters in their own house. We must continue on a course that lets us see more of these successes from coast to coast to coast. In order to achieve this, Aboriginal institutions

need to be able to meet the same tests of responsibility as any other order of government. Where they do, the results speak for themselves: employment, hope and education. Where they fail, Aboriginal peoples end up as victims, whether of federal paternalism or tribal mismanagement.

The right destination for Aboriginal Canada is clear: self-governing communities, using their traditional

the right destination for Aboriginal Canada is clear: self-governing communities, using their traditional knowledge and resources, to sustain and enhance their distinct existence and culture.

knowledge and resources, to sustain and enhance their distinct existence and culture. These developments need to be supported by a consistent federal policy of respecting and honouring existing treaties as well as devolving power, resources and responsibility to First Nations, so that in the not too distant future, the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, a legacy of the 1876 Indian Act, does itself out of a job. The same path toward self-government should be followed with respect to the Métis. For the Inuit, the federal government must ensure it is living up to the modern land claim agreements that have been signed. Aboriginal Canadians, by virtue of their history as first nations and the treaty relation between their nations and the Crown, will always have a different status than other Canadians. But they must also be equal citizens in their country.

low income Canadians

For more than 60 years, the federal government has gradually put together key elements of an income security system for our citizens. Child tax benefits have taken many poor families with children out of poverty. Employment

insurance has supplemented seasonal incomes and cushioned the transition from one job to the next. Old age pensions have lifted most of our seniors out of poverty. These benefits must keep pace with the cost of living and the number of Canadians in poverty must continue to fall. We need to ensure that employment insurance does not exclude coverage for those who require temporary assistance, but

over time, the federal government could become the ultimate guarantor of income security for all Canadians. if implemented, the working income tax benefit has the capacity to eliminate absolute poverty for all Canadian families.

we also need to do so without reducing incentives to work.

Too many Canadians are trapped in municipal or provincial

welfare systems that all but eliminate incentives to take low-wage work. As soon as they enter the labour force, they lose benefits such as subsidized housing and prescription drugs, and also incur new work-related expenses. A typical single parent who takes a low-income job could lose almost 80 cents for each additional dollar earned because of higher taxes and reduced income support. This “welfare trap” wastes resources and it wastes lives. Various proposals exist to draw welfare dependents back into the labour force and help them achieve self-sufficiency. One of the most promising—a federal-provincial partnership proposed in the Liberal government’s November 2005 economic and fiscal update—is a federal working income tax benefit for low-income families. The refundable tax benefit would provide a basic tax credit and an income supplement for families struggling to survive on low wages. The supplements would decline as their wage income increased and would be eliminated altogether once the family reached a basic income of \$25,000. Closing this gap

in the Canadian income security net could be done gradually, as resources become available, and could be supplemented by other federal-provincial-territorial partnerships to achieve

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full coverage of all eligible citizens and to eliminate overlap in the programs offered by different orders of government. Over time, the federal government could become the ultimate guarantor of income security for all Canadians. If implemented, the working income tax benefit has the capacity to eliminate absolute poverty for all Canadian families. No other measure would do more to strengthen the spine of equal citizenship.

The Conservatives have jettisoned Liberal commitments to early childhood learning, but their alternative, a monthly \$100 benefit per child under six is both wasteful—it is paid to families who often do not need it—and inefficient—the benefit is not enough to purchase meaningful day care. A Liberal government should work with the provinces to develop a robust national early childhood learning strategy. It should also target the Canada Child Tax Benefit to low income families, increase the child care expense deduction and increase the parental leave portion of federal employment insurance benefits so that working men and women can take more time off to look after their children. Such measures, delivered as resources become available, would strengthen the family and give all our children an equal start in life.

immigrant Canadians

Successive Liberal governments have tackled the shortcomings of the immigration system, most recently with a \$1.7 billion agreement with the provinces to reduce backlogs, improve foreign credentials recognition, and

increase language training. But it is time to take further steps. A global case management computer system, already initiated under the previous Liberal government, should reduce processing delays. Currently applications are processed outside of Canada in immigration offices around the globe. It would be more efficient to process them centrally in Canada, leaving local immigration offices the task of interviewing cases that require face to face contact. Central processing would make it possible to know who is in the queue, how long the queue is, and this knowledge would help both applicants and employers seeking workers.

**the Quebec government
does a better job providing
focused resettlement
and the rest of Canada
should learn from the
Quebec example.**

At a time of increasing labour shortage in the West, persistent unemployment in some of Canada's eastern regions, and a mismatch between immigrants arriving and the

jobs we need to fill, the federal government should play a more vigorous role, in consultation with the provinces, municipalities, the private sector and settlement agencies, in directing labour where it is needed most in Canada. The federal government needs to work much more closely with employers to identify labour needs that can be filled through the immigration system. The government should also adjust its points system to widen the criteria to fit current labour needs.

Family re-unification could be simplified if Canada moved to a whole family application system, where families apply in a single application, and where the definition of family is widened to include siblings. This would considerably simplify the application process and shorten queues and delays.

Where immigrants have credentials that are not recognized, the federal government should work with the

provinces to fund colleges and universities to provide top-up certification programs to bring immigrants up to Canadian professional standards. The government should also work with employers to establish federally funded internships to provide new immigrants with early Canadian experience. The training, subsidy and placement programs now available to Canadian citizens under EI should be made available to new immigrants.

Finally, the federal government should re-assert its leadership in the resettlement process. Currently, this process has been farmed out to a vast network of private agencies receiving municipal, provincial and federal support. The Quebec government does a better job providing focused resettlement and the rest of Canada should learn from the Quebec example. We need to ensure that we are leveraging the success of programs that are working well and that the federal government is working with all stakeholders including the provinces to provide needed focus of purpose. What is also needed is a one-stop Canada Welcome centre—at airports and other points of entry or as part of existing Service Canada facilities, where new immigrants can be directed efficiently to housing, assistance,

language and job training. Better co-ordination and information would give new immi-

immigrants want to hold on to their culture, language and religion, but also to belong to Canada as equal partners. our resettlement strategies must deliver both.

grants the feeling that they were on the road to becoming Canadians, equal participants in a national enterprise. A Canada Welcome centre would give our citizens-to-be the simple message: your new country welcomes you to your new home.

Improving how Canada settles its new immigrants is important for the future of Canadian multiculturalism.

23.

Current resettlement strategies often marginalize immigrants, delivering them back to their own ethnic, religious or linguistic communities to provide them with assistance, advice and training. A Canada Welcome centre combined with streamlined support services that are easy to access sends the message that immigrants can get into the mainstream. Immigrants want to hold on to their culture, language and religion, but also to belong to Canada as equal partners. Our resettlement strategies must deliver both. When they pass their citizenship tests—and these should require proficiency in one or other of the official languages as well as a working knowledge of our history and constitution—we should welcome them into their citizenship with a ceremony that clearly articulates Canadian values: equality, respect and the rule of law.

3

● strengthening national unity.

This nation-building project is a strategy of systematic investment by government in the people of Canada so that we can be more united, prosperous, sustainable and successful on the world stage.

a strong federation is a partnership of equals.

A national project of these dimensions requires a strong federation.

A strong federation means accountable government at the Aboriginal, municipal and provincial level, with a federal government guaranteeing common rights and standards of citizenship for all Canadians.

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In a strong federation all orders of government should have the economic capacity to serve their citizens. Our current structure does not accord the municipal levels of

government the capacity to provide the roads, schools and other services that their people need. Similarly, Aboriginal band councils lack the capacity to provide accountable services to their people. The current Conservative government has no desire to strengthen Aboriginal or municipal orders of government. A Liberal government would strengthen both, by entering into direct partnerships to give them the resources they need.

A strong federation does not imply a domineering Ottawa: this country is too vast and too diverse to be run from a single centre. But a federation cannot be strong unless the federal government has the fiscal capacity and national authority to maintain the unity of Canadian citizenship at home and protect Canadian interests and values overseas.

Canada is already one of the most decentralized federations on earth. The fiscal capacity of the federal government—its share of national taxation—has fallen steadily from more than 75 percent of revenues of all levels of government in the 1950's to less than 50 percent

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now. The federal government's revenue as a percentage of GDP is at an all-time low of 15 percent. If this percentage falls further, if the federal government transfers

further fiscal power to the provinces, the capacity of the national government to promote and sustain the equality of citizenship will be damaged.

Canadians do not want this to happen. We have deep loyalties to our provinces and regions of origin, but we also want to be Canadians, to share in national experience and to build a great country together.

The Liberal Party has always understood this. The current Conservative government is taking a different path: telling municipalities and Aboriginal governments to fend for themselves; cutting back national initiatives like the early childhood learning program and cutting taxes so that the federal government gradually loses its capacity to make the investments Canadians want in education, social welfare and infrastructure.

Two very different visions of federal authority are therefore on offer: a Liberal vision of government as a nation-builder and a Conservative vision of government as a night-watchman. Liberals use revenues to strengthen what we hold in common, while Conservatives cut taxes and weaken the bonds that tie us together.

Every Liberal wants taxes as low as possible. But Canadians do not just want low taxes: we

two very different visions of federal authority are therefore on offer: a Liberal vision of government as a nation-builder and a Conservative vision of government as a night-watchman.

also want a united country, and we know Canada is held together by prudent public investment. The Liberal vision promises a stronger federation and a stronger national citizenship.

respect is a two way street.

The Conservative approach will weaken the federation and weaken Canada.

A strong federation means each order of government respecting the constitutional powers of the other orders.

Liberals use revenues to strengthen what we hold in common, while Conservatives cut taxes and weaken the bonds that tie us together.

Respect is a two way street. The federal government should not trample into provincial, municipal and Aboriginal jurisdictions. Equally, these orders of government should respect legitimate federal jurisdictions: defending the nation and its borders, maintaining a national market, building national infrastructure and promoting common standards of citizenship grounded in the principles of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Where jurisdictions overlap, stable-long term partnership agreements need to be put in place.

Quebec

In a strong federation, all provinces should be equal, but all provinces are not the same. Each came to our federation with a particular history that must be recognized. Quebec in particular has a unique history: the only former French colony to join confederation with its own distinct language, legal system and religious institutions. It entered the federation on the strict understanding that its distinguishing features would receive special protection in the new federal government of Canada. Canadian unity ever since has depended on recognition of this understanding.

This achieved balance—between provincial autonomy and national citizenship—already allows a clear majority of Quebecers to say, with pride, “*Le Quebec est ma nation, le Canada est mon pays.*”

Quebecers, moreover, have come to understand themselves as a nation, with a language, history, culture and territory that marks them out as a separate people. Quebec is a civic nation, not an ethnic nation.^{ix} It is composed of all the peoples from many lands who have come to Quebec and associate themselves with the values and traditions of Quebec and Canada. Quebec’s Charter of Rights—and its language laws—balance the rights of the majority, with equal rights for linguistic and other minorities.

More than 5000 nations are recognized as such in the world, but there are less than 200 states at the United Nations. It is normal, therefore, for nations to join with other peoples to share a state. The Scottish people consider themselves a nation, but regard Britain as their country. The Basques and Catalans regard their people as nations, but accept Spain as their country. So it is with Quebec. Quebecers, by considerable majorities, consider Quebec their nation and Canada their country.

To recognize Quebec—and Aboriginal peoples—as nations within the fabric of Canada is not to make some new concession. It is simply to acknowledge a fact. Nor is it a prelude to further devolution of powers. Quebec already possesses the authority it needs, in areas of health, education, immigration, manpower training, language and culture, to protect the identity of its people and to promote its economic and social development. Since the 1960's, it has opted out of national programs, like the Canada Pension Plan, while providing substitute programs that meet both its objectives and those of the federation. These negotiated rights to opt out should be respected,

to recognize Quebec—and Aboriginal peoples—as nations within the fabric of Canada is not to make some new concession. it is simply to acknowledge a fact. nor is it a prelude to further devolution of powers.

but equally Quebecers should have the right to opt in, to participate fully in pan-Canadian programs that expand their citizenship, increase their opportunities and improve their economic performance.

This achieved balance—between provincial autonomy and national citizenship—already allows a clear majority of Quebecers to say, with pride, *“Le Quebec est ma nation, le Canada est mon pays.”*

the constitution

Despite this functioning balance, the province of Quebec has not given its assent to the constitution of 1982, and until it does, our federation's architecture remains unfinished. Creating the conditions for a successful negotiation to complete our nation-building will take time. Ratification of a new constitution will require good faith and political will on all sides. When these conditions are in place, Canadians should be prepared to ratify the facts of our life as a country composed of distinct nations in a

...the affirmation of the primacy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the ultimate expression of the unity and indivisibility of Canadian citizenship.

new constitutional document. The details that must be reconciled in a constitutional settlement

are complex, but the fundamental principles to be respected are clear: a constitutional division of powers among Aboriginal, territorial, provincial and federal orders of government, with clear procedures for sharing jurisdictions that overlap; the acknowledgement of the national status of Quebec and the indigenous nations of Canada; the definition of a clear mandate for the federal authority to promote the unity of Canadian citizenship, the unity of the national economic space and the protection of Canadian sovereignty; the constitutional definition of Canada as a bilingual and multi-national state; and the affirmation of the primacy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the ultimate expression of the unity and indivisibility of Canadian citizenship.

promoting common citizenship

Constitutional review is for the future. Right now, Canadians are looking for a new era of co-operation among the orders of government. Together, they need to negotiate a transparent, rational and long-term fiscal relationship that accurately considers the true fiscal capacity of every order of government and then arrives at an agreement that recalibrates federal transfers and equalization to facilitate the realization of identified national goals. This recalibration must

ensure that less well off provinces and territories can provide for their citizens without dam-

aging the capacity of wealthier provinces to serve the needs of theirs. This era of co-operation must include the recognition of our cities and a plan for ensuring that they have the financial means to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Without a transparent and fair recalibration of the fiscal relationship at all levels, there cannot be equality of citizenship for all Canadians.

Beyond providing funds to the provinces, the federal government has an essential role in promoting common approaches to national challenges.

Health care, for example, is a provincial jurisdiction,

but the federal government has a legitimate role, under the Canada Health Act, in ensuring that Canadians, across the country, have access to publicly funded care that is

this era of co-operation must include the recognition of our cities and a plan for ensuring that they have the financial means to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

we have all fought for the principle that access to health should not depend on income; we do not want a Canada in which the quality of health care, and therefore of citizenship, depends on what province you live in.

roughly comparable in quality of service, regardless of where a citizen happens to live. We have all fought for the principle that access to health should not depend on income; we do not want a Canada in which the quality of health care, and therefore of citizenship, depends on what province you live in.

The federal government has a national role in four additional areas of health care, first in promoting shared best practice across jurisdictions, so that, for example, an innovation in management or patient care pioneered in Alberta finds its way to New Brunswick or vice versa. Second, the federal government should use its jurisdiction in research to make itself the leader in national health research,

Canadian governments at all levels should encourage a distinctive Canadian voice and perspective.

pioneering new strategies in care and patient management, as well as fundamental biomedical research into disease causation and cure.

Third, the federal government has a role in guaranteeing portability of health rights across jurisdictions so that, for example, a Quebec family re-locating to Ontario, or vice versa, should be able to secure immediate access to the health care system of their new province.

Fourth, the federal government has a legitimate role in leading provinces and municipalities in formulating fitness, sport and health promotion strategies aimed at making Canadians healthier. Such health promotion strategies need to be aligned with the national food strategy, mentioned earlier, so that together we can reduce demand on our health systems and keep health expenditure under control.

promoting national experience

Nation-building is more than a matter of creating government programs and sound institutions. It is also a matter

of encouraging shared national experience among our citizens. One source of shared experience comes from the artists and thinkers who have articulated what it is to be Canadian. While great art and vision can never be called into being by government subsidy, and while all art must find its market, Canadian governments at all levels should encourage a distinctive Canadian voice and perspective. We will always need a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, functioning in both official languages, a Canada Council and the research councils that fund our scientists, researchers and teachers. We need to support public institutions—museums, opera houses, libraries, concert halls—that sustain our common heritage. Investment in cultural industries, as well as basic science, social research and applied technology not only improves our economic performance, it also helps to bind us together as a people.

Innovative federal policy should encourage young Canadians to grow up with an experience of living, working and studying in other regions of Canada. Federal funding should encourage,

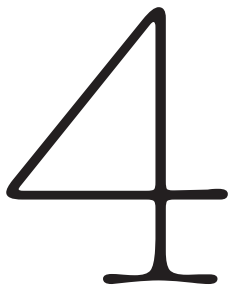
investment in cultural industries, as well as basic science, social research and applied technology not only improves our economic performance, it also helps to bind us together as a people.

rather than penalize Canadian universities when they take in students from out of province; the federal government should offer to compensate provinces so that they can eliminate differen-

youth internships and student work experience programs in the federal government should be expanded and internationalized so that our best and brightest can learn from the experience of public service at home and overseas.

tial fees for out of province students; federal programs should encourage young students and young workers to spend their summers working and studying outside of their region. Youth internships and student work experience programs in the federal government should be expanded and internationalized so that our best and brightest can learn from the experience of public service at home and overseas. Everywhere in Canada, federal funding should support, extend and develop our bilingualism as a people, by investing in immersion programs, summer exchanges between Francophone and Anglophone Canada and with francophone communities around the world. Particular attention should be devoted to federal support for the francophone communities outside of Quebec: guaranteeing them education, health services and community development in their own language, together with efforts to promote exchanges to strengthen links between communities.

Finally, we should take pride in the multicultural heritage of Canadians, but the bias of federal policy should be towards the promotion of exchange and interaction among our many cultures together so that the multitude of peoples who make up our country feel they are bound together in a common Canadian experience. In its own hiring and promotion processes, the federal government should seek to create a federal civil service that reflects the full diversity of our country. We want to live together as citizens, with a common life, not as an infinity of ethno-cultural ghettos. Federal policy in the multicultural field should be guided by the instinct that we want a Canada in which pride in national, religious or ethnic origins is always balanced by a common commitment to Canadian citizenship.



strengthening our place in the ● world.

Liberal commitments to the equality of citizenship at home have always found their counterpart in a belief that Canadians should be good citizens overseas. The Liberal faith in the rule of law at home is expressed overseas in a faith in an international order where force is bound by law. Where disputes and conflicts arise, Liberals believe

that force can only be legitimately exercised in a just cause, as a last resort, for the protection of other human beings,

the challenge for Canada is not to wait for others to act, but to form coalitions of free nations to strengthen multilateral institutions, especially those that strengthen international human rights and free trade.

not for acts of aggression, and wherever possible, with the prior approval of the United Nations.

Canada was one of the founding partners of the international order established after 1945: its diplomats and statesmen were central to the creation of the UN, the UN Human Rights instruments, NATO, and the forerunners of the WTO. Since the end of the Cold War, the creation of new institutions of world order has languished for lack of leadership by the great powers. The challenge for Canada is not to wait for others to act, but to form coalitions of free nations to strengthen multilateral institutions, especially those that strengthen international human

rights and free trade. Throughout the 1990's, Canada did just that: by negotiating the landmines treaty, promoting the International Criminal Court, supporting the WTO and reform of the human rights machinery at the UN. In 2001, I served as the Canadian member of the international commission on intervention and state sovereignty. Thanks to the report we sent to the UN Secretary General and now adopted by the General Assembly, states have embraced the concept that if a country is unable or unwilling to protect its own citizens from genocidal massacre or ethnic cleansing, other countries have "a responsibility to protect" their fellow human beings, whether by prevention or direct intervention. The 'responsibility to protect' expresses a very Canadian idea of international solidarity among peoples. Canada should back these words with deeds, where necessary committing troops overseas to protect human rights and advance human security.

A well-equipped military is the *sine qua non* of international leadership. We need to keep investing in Canada's military so that we can respond to demands from the UN and the international community for Canadian involvement overseas. In a world of failed states and terrorist havens, Canada has learned to adapt its peace-keeping traditions to the demands of peace-building: combining military, humanitarian and reconstruction teams together to provide human security for populations in danger. This transformation of our internationalist traditions is underway in Afghanistan. If we see this mission through, we will be able to provide leadership elsewhere. If we bail out half way, no one will turn to Canada when the going gets rough.

Our commitments in Afghanistan are to the Afghan government, the Afghan people and our NATO partners. But these commitments are not open-ended or unlimited. We must hold to a mission that combines humanitarian and reconstruction goals with military action to repel the Taliban. If the Conservative government changes this balance or alters the mission, the Liberal opposition must

hold them to account.

In addition to a robust military, Canada needs an enterprising diplomatic service and a well-funded commitment to sustainable development. We work for a world where Afghan girls can graduate from school, where Africans can develop their countries free of the burden of disease, where states emerging from strife and dictatorships can turn to Canadians to help train their judiciary, establish their police force and consolidate the rule of law.

We should substantially increase our foreign assistance budget to meet the .7 percent of GDP target first proposed in 1972 by Lester B. Pearson. Besides increasing resources, we need to focus our development priorities on areas where Canadians have special expertise. One key area is governance. No sustainable development is possible without good government. Indeed, “peace, order and good government” is the motto of our constitutional system and

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many of our government institutions —the Mounties, the Supreme Court, Elections Canada and the Auditor General,

to take but four examples—evoke admiration world-wide.

We should make ourselves the governance

specialists of the emerging international order, just as Norway made itself the conflict resolution specialists of

**“peace, order
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the 1990s. Canada should create a corps of specialists in good government—lawyers, judges, police, election monitors, public health administrators—who can be seconded overseas to work with the governments and NGO's of developing societies.

Our central international challenge is maintaining good relations with the United States. Sometimes, speaking up for Canadian values and interests will require us to stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States. Sometimes it will require us to disagree. We should do so without grand-standing. We should oppose the policies of American administrations in so far as they go against Canadian interests, but anti-Americanism itself should have no place in our national policy. We need neither inferiority nor superiority complexes towards the United States. They've been good neighbours, friends and allies.

**we should make
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international order.**

Yet we are different—
we always have been,
and we always will be,
and our independent
foreign policy may
at times reflect those
differences.

In working to change US policies with which we disagree, we need to form alliances with friends in Congress and in business. On the issue of border security, for example, we need to make common cause with US governors, congressmen and senators from border states who share our concerns about the devastating economic impact of a full passport requirement for cross-border travel. Working with these key American allies offers us the best hope of obtaining our common objective: a secure border that also allows us to maintain frictionless exchange between our two peoples.

Finally, a Canadian foreign policy worthy of the name defends universal values. Canada should be especially clear about terrorism. Terror is not a relative term: all uses of violence to intimidate civilian populations for political

purposes count as terror, and Canada must stand against terror in all its forms. Canada cannot afford to allow its own soil to be used as a safe haven to plot, fund or support terrorist activity in other countries. Multicultural tolerance is not the same thing as turning a blind eye. All Canadians, whatever their origins, and whatever the grievances that exist in their original homelands, are bound to respect the rule of law.

Canada should not equivocate between terrorists and democracies. It should side with freedom against tyranny, rights against reaction, democracy against despotism. In these battles between right and wrong, a Canada that is true to itself cannot afford to be neutral.

Canadians believe that the world is safer if there are more rights respecting democracies in the world. We believe the world is more secure if there are fewer persons languishing in jail for their political, religious or cultural beliefs. We believe that we cannot promote our own welfare—for example in domestic subsidy policies—if these policies bring harm to other countries or peoples. Canada not only believes these things, but acts on them, working patiently with other governments to expand the circle of freedom.

conclusion.

Distinctive and progressive at home, unafraid to lead abroad: this is my Canada, a country of free and equal citizens, bound together by a spine of common rights and shared traditions and devoted to expanding the circle of freedom and human rights around the world.

The conviction that guides these ideas—and the overwhelming aspiration I hear on my travels across the country as a candidate—is that as a people we are less than

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the sum of our parts and we hunger to be more. I want my party to bet its future on this hunger of Canadians to be more, to be better, to share a great destiny as a people.

This nation-building project is ambitious—but we are at our best as a people when we are ambitious. Achieving

let us be free to dream. in this manifesto
let us be free to hope. will require tough,
patient and per-

sistent leadership for its goals to be achieved but Canada—and the Liberal Party in particular—has never failed to elect tough, patient and persistent leaders.

We have always been a people that dared to dream. The land inspires dreams. The awesome size of our country and the astonishing beauty of our landscape have always called us to great and daring ventures. Today, we need leaders unafraid to draw on the resourcefulness of Canadians, unafraid to ask Canadians to be equal to the greatness of their land.

Let us be free to dream. Let us be free to hope.

We are a great people, a serious people.

Our brightest days, the ones that gave us good reason to be proud of ourselves, have come when we have built the nation together. Our brightest days are not behind us. They lie just ahead.

notes.

- ⁱ Canadian Labour Congress figures, 2006.
- ⁱⁱ ‘BC Still a Natural Resource Economy.’ BC Statistics, 1996.
<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/exp/exp9604.pdf>
- ⁱⁱⁱ ‘Canada’s Market Share in Asia, 2004’, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, http://www.asiapacific.ca/data/trade/t5_cshare.cfm
- ^{iv} Rebalancing Priorities for Canada’s Prosperity. Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity. March 2006.
- ^v Learning and Development Outlook, Conference Board of Canada. 2005
- ^{vi} Picking a Path to Prosperity : A Strategic for Global Best Commerce. Conference Board of Canada, April 2006.
- ^{vii} Jacobs, Mindelle “Poor literacy skills hinder too many”
Edmonton Sun, June 12, 2006
- ^{viii} Environment Canada, Canada’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 1990 - 2003
- ^{ix} See Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging* (Toronto:Penguin, 1993), for further discussion of civic and ethnic nationalism. See also *The Rights Revolution* (Toronto: Anansi, 2000).