

Canada's identity crisis

By KEVIN FORAN

Canada is experiencing an identity crisis of sorts. As one of the indirect consequences of the issues that arose in the free trade debate, Canada has been asked to define its cultural identity and its national sovereignty.

Exactly what do we mean when we proudly affirm that we are citizens of an allegedly independent, sovereign state? Just what is Canadian culture anyway and what, if anything, do these things have to do with free trade?

Both sides of the free trade debate would agree that Canada must operate in a world where countries are being drawn into increasingly interlaced relationships due to the pressures and demands of modern economic and technological interdependence. Canada's economy - like it or not - is linked into a world economy. We are not an economic island.

It is a curious fact of history that economic policies at times have crucial social and political implications.

Depending on who one talks to, free trade can mean anything from the greatest trade deal ever negotiated between two nations in which both gain in real economic terms to a potentially disastrous mistake which may spell the end of Canada's economic sovereignty and, as a consequence, our government's ability to control our nation's economic, social, and political future through social policies. Make no mistake about it, the stakes are high.

The proponents of free trade argue that Canada must have a free trade agreement with the United States in order to ensure Canada's access to its most important and largest market. These proponents are quick to point to supposedly non-bias sources to support their claim that free trade is a positive step in the right direction. For example, Peter Cook's article, "Free trade's foremost losers are of the left," (*Globe and Mail*, October 27, 1987) points to the Economic Council of Canada's recent annual review, *Reaching Outward*, in which the council concluded that if free trade were implemented that 350,000 new jobs (in net terms) would be created for Canadians by 1995. Furthermore it said, "the simulations also indicate that nationally, a bilateral free-trade agreement with the United States would boost real wages, increase production, stimulate business investment and in-

dustrial revitalization, narrow the Canada-U.S. manufacturing productivity gap, lower prices, reduce total government deficits and strengthen the Canadian dollar in relation to the U.S. dollar." The Economic Council's findings were based on an economic model which factored in the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade.

These pro-free traders have very little respect for so called Cultural Nationalists calling their argument a political "red-

herring". Culture, the proponents state, has been explicitly protected in the tentative agreement. It is not an issue they say.

Another "red-herring" the proponents contend, is the notion that somehow Canada's sovereignty is questioned within the proposed free trade agreement. They argue that Canada's sovereignty has nothing to do with free trade and is protected in the agreement in any case. Assistant Economic Professor David Murrelle of UNB when

asked about the sovereignty issue, pointed out that there was a study done for the MacDonald Commission which examined the European Economic Community for any problems concerning sovereignty and found none. He pointed out that Ireland is a member of E.E.C. and that its sovereignty has not been affected through its membership in the E.E.C. "Ireland is a relatively small country and it has not had its sovereignty questioned," said

Prof. Murrelle.

Professor Wiktor Askanas of UNB also supports the proposed agreement stating that, "It's a positive deal for both sides. The details must be ironed out and when they are, I think this will clear the air. I think we should judge for ourselves. There is an old English saying that is appropriate -- Gentlemen are not arguing about the facts. Gentlemen are checking the facts."

Molson Chairman at UNB

James Black, Chairman of the Board of Molson Companies Ltd., has been appointed the first executive-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick.

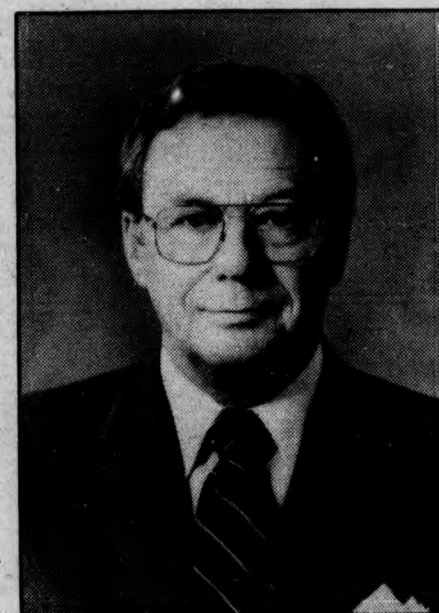
Mr. Black will be "half teaching and half learning" at UNB until the end of November. For the highly successful executive, the weeks at UNB will be a "change and a challenge... and an opportunity to learn about the education process, especially about the process people go through on their way to the business world."

For UNB administration students and faculty on both UNB campuses, Mr. Black's presence will mean an opportunity to discover from an expert just how the business world operates.

A chartered accountant by

training, Mr. Black has spent most of his career with Molson's, beginning in 1949 as assistant to the treasurer of Molson Brewery Ltd. He became assistant treasurer, next comptroller, and then moved to Calgary as head of Molson's western Canadian brewing operations. In 1968, he was appointed president of Molson Breweries of Canada. Five years later he became president and chief executive officer of the parent company, The Molson Companies Ltd., with headquarters in Toronto. Mr. Black became chairman of the board in 1985.

Mr. Black's connections with UNB are varied: he received an honorary degree in October 1986 and his son received a business administration degree here in 1973. In recent years, Mr. Black and UNB



James Black

President James Downey have been active on the board of the Corporate-Higher Education Forum.

Most of Mr. Black's time at UNB will be spent with ad-

ministration students and senior transportation students. He will be talking to them about a variety of business topics including government and business relations, free trade and the brewing industry, corporate strategy, and the role of the board of directors in public corporations.

Mr. Black will also carry out two university management studies and work with a special committee studying business and faculty relations.

He hopes to go back to Molson's "refreshed and revitalized and with a better understanding of life in the university and of management, faculty and students."

Editor's note: Mr. Black is available for interviews on request. He may be contacted in the Faculty of Administration on the Fredericton campus at 453-4869.

Hansen attends education forum

By MARK STEVENS

Larry Hansen, Vice-President Internal, returned yesterday from a forum in post-secondary education held in Saskatoon.

According to Hansen, the purpose of the forum was to explore the future of post-secondary education in Canada.

It was the first time in recent history that the federal and provincial governments combined to sponsor a forum examining the problems facing Canada's universities.

"One of the most important

conclusions of the forum was that a national consultative body be created to offer direction to Canadian universities", said Hansen. This idea was supported by McKenna in the run-up to New Brunswick's provincial election.

"It was also decided that there ought to be a renewed commitment to the encouragement of research", stressed Hansen. "The contribution that international students make in this respect are vital in this respect", he added.

Nevertheless, Hansen reported that some native representatives at the con-

ference felt that their needs were, for the most part, being ignored. Forum members acknowledged that universities in Canada were not supportive of minority groups. "Though we encourage their attendance at universities by leading them to the portals, we don't tend to support them through their academic careers", said Hansen. "Universities are still the bastion of the white middle-classes", he claimed. "We're not getting a fair representation of Canadians in establishments of higher education."

There was also a renewed emphasis on the necessity for a liberal arts education. "Businessmen, scientists and university administrators recognized the importance of a well balanced education, despite the recent emphasis on specialization", said Hansen.

"Out of the conference should come a significant commitment on the part of Canadian universities, as well as the federal and provincial governments", he added. "The recommendations made by forum members have to be followed up."