

The Maytree Foundation is a private foundation, our mission is the reduction of poverty in Canada. A big mandate and one that we could easily get fuzzy about. But we have the good fortune to be joined at the hip with the corporate arm of our company - Avana Capital - as my chairman often jokes, we work hard at making money in the morning and equally hard at giving it away in the afternoon. If in the morning we are venture capitalists, then in the afternoon we are venture philanthropists. We are always on the look out for a return on investment. In the case of philanthropy the return we look for is social and public good. The best most efficient way for us to make an impact is to change the way society acts and think and by tapping into the power of our collective will, and attendant large public budgets. As Alan Broadbent, Chairman of the Maytree Foundation says “The greatest advances in the wellbeing of populations have always come from public measures: public sanitation systems ended the plagues; public education systems have carried nations into prosperity; vaccination programs virtually wiped out polio and tuberculosis; seat-belt laws have reduced road carnage; and anti-smoking ordinances have reduced lung cancers.”

So Maytree has focused on public policy as the biggest lever available to us in building stronger and more equitable societies. I am particularly delighted to speak to you about an issue that we are deeply passionate about, and have taken the time to learn and think about - the changing face of Canada and what this means for us as a nation. And before I start on the substance of my remarks, I want to be clear that my comments today are limited to my area of experience and expertise, which is within a particular aspect of diversity - immigration. I believe that while Aboriginal peoples and their experiences are an integral and vibrant foundation of the Canadian story, their story and context is more deeply woven, and exceeds at last this more limited discourse on diversity

In this room at least we know that within our lifetimes Canada will look, sound and feel very different from what it was ten years ago and what it will be ten years from now.

It sometimes serves us well to start with some of the most compelling facts.

1. Canada has the second highest proportion of immigrants in the world after Australia. In the US, one of every ten people is an immigrant; in Canada it is almost double that.
2. 30% of our population is over the age of 50. The OECD has concluded that the dependency ratio (i.e. the ratio of working vs. non-working members of society) will decline rapidly in Canada unless shored up by population growth. Today, immigration accounts for about 60% of population growth. By 2026, it is projected to account for close to 100%.
3. By 2011, when half of all baby boomers will be 55 years and over, new Canadians will account for virtually all of the country's new workers. The nation will soon lose a large share of its current supply of doctors, nurses, university professors and skilled construction workers.
4. Already today, 70% of the net growth in the labour market is provided by immigrants. By 2011, this figure will rise to 100%.
5. Big cities and bright lights appear to exercise a powerful pull for immigrants. 89 % of immigrants in 2001 chose to settle in the top 10 CMAs of the country, with Toronto and Vancouver being the top destinations. However Windsor, Ottawa, Hamilton, Montreal, Calgary and Edmonton also attract their share of immigrants.
6. In 2001, almost 4 million people in Canada identified themselves as visible minorities, that's 13.4% of the population

The prognosis for the future continues to reflect this trend:

1. By 2017 our immigrant population will hit 22 per cent, a level not seen since 1911-31. It will be double the rate of immigration to the U.S. Only Australia is in our league.
2. Unlike other nations, our diversity is and will continue to be truly global. The US is a story of two cultures – Blacks and Latinos, in Germany it is mostly Turks, in France it is mostly Arabs from the Magreb. Canada's population is the most heterogeneous and truly multicultural.
3. By 2017, visible minorities will grow to be anywhere from 19- 23% of our population and will form majorities in the Toronto and Vancouver regions.
4. Immigration will continue to be primarily a tale of three cities. In Toronto, South Asians alone will cross the 1-million mark — the biggest concentration of a visible minority group in any Canadian city. That would also make Toronto the biggest Western centre of that diaspora outside the Indian subcontinent. In Vancouver, Chinese will be the biggest visible minority (591,000), while in Montreal it will be blacks (200,000).

In other words, when 100 visible minorities will be old enough to retire, 142 others will join the workforce. In the rest of the population, for every 100 people leaving, only 75 will replace them. And so, visible minorities will increasingly pay for our pensions, medicare and senior care. Possibly, then just possibly, it is not unwise to start thinking about how to be nice or nicer to them.

But the real story is much more vibrant than these dry facts and figures. The real story is in the changes in our urban landscapes and changes in the way we think and act. We worship not only in churches and synagogues, but in temples - Chinese, Buddhist, Hindu and Tibetan; in mosques – Shia, Sunni, Ahmadiya and Ismaili. We worship in gurdwaras and in synagogues. In Markham, Ontario and Richmond BC, one would be hard put to tell whether the children get

more excited about Xmas than about the Chinese New Year. In York region, Ramadan is celebrated with the same vigour as Hanukkah.

The sports we play have also changed - not just hockey and baseball, but also soccer and cricket and increasingly badminton and table tennis. Toronto is home to over 200 cricket teams who play on 46 pitches; the cricket community is looking to build a stadium to host an international tournament. In fact, when the Sahara Cup match was played from the grounds of the Cricket Club in Toronto and broadcast on television, it registered more viewers than any other sports cast ever in Canada, because it reached so many people outside of Canada. When Googosh, who is the Britney Spears of Iran, broke her long 20-year abstention from performing, the Air Canada center was filled to capacity with over 20,000 Iranians.

The consumer clout of the so called “ethnic markets” is playing a prominent role in the marketing and product development strategies for big corporations – Proctor and Gamble knows who buys TIDE, Bell and Rogers have understood the need to develop new products for new consumer markets – the overseas telephone industry, the satellite markets, bollywood movies. The construction and housing boom in large urban centers owes much to the first time immigrant homeowner or apartment renters. The new Air Canada route between Toronto and New Delhi generates over two million dollars in sales per year. The decision to market specifically to the South Asian community in the GTA is a no-brainer for IKEA. What do immigrants need when they come to this country? They ask. “ A coat, a mortgage and some furniture.”

Burgeoning immigrant populations have created a host of industries to serve their own needs, in the process employing or generating business for Canadians. The wedding and death industries are a point in case. The South Asian community in the GTA spends over a quarter of a million dollars on weddings alone. Part of that statistic belongs to me. Two years ago my daughter got

married and I chose to throw a full Punjabi event a la Monsoon wedding with all the requisite bells and whistles, including the traditional horse. The question was where to find the horse? It was quite easy. There is a farmer of good Scottish descent in Ajax, who rents his horse and himself out in full Punjabi regalia. An interesting reversal of fortune.

However even as immigrants continue to signify themselves by their entrepreneurial spirit, increasingly the value-added proposition is the link between Canada and their source countries.

The growing economies of India and China – representing more than a third of the world's population constitute an unprecedented opportunity for us. A massive new middle class, hungry for products that Canada can supply, that new Canadians can develop, produce and market. Over the course of the next few years, 77000 visits from China to Canada are expected to increase to 1.4 million visits. Joseph D'Cruz, a professor of international business at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management predicts that in years ahead, more Indian immigrants will develop businesses in Canada to link "the Indian production base for software and Internet-mediated services with customers in the U.S. and Canada. For example, Pathways, a Markham based company with roots in India, does brisk business in the outsourcing industry sending work from back end processing work from Canadian hospitals to Poona India.

But there is a reverse trend too that is interesting.

ICICI (The Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India), India's largest private bank, recently opened three retail branches in Brampton, Scarborough and downtown Toronto, with a fourth in the city's Little India on Gerrard St.. It offers a unique "Hello Canada" account specially designed for those moving to Canada from India, Dubai, Bahrain or the United Kingdom. The account allows a customer to open a Canadian bank account from overseas and transfer funds to their new homeland prior to their arrival.

But I believe that greatest value is impossible to measure in mere dollars and cents or jobs generated. We need only think of the gloss that has been added to our reputation through the writings of Rohinton Mistry, Alberto Manguel, Dionne Brand, Michael Ondaatje, Wayson Choy, MG Vassanji, Joy Kogawa, David Bezmozgis, Nico Ricci, Shauna Singh Baldwin; the films of Deepa Mehta or Atom Egoyan; the architecture of a Raymond Moriyama or Moshe Safdie; the theatre of DJanet Spears or Dany Laferriere to know that increasingly our core Canadian cultural identity is being defined by artists who are immigrants. This multi-ethnic face of Canada is increasingly how we are defined beyond our borders. These voices constitute some of our best-selling authors, as well as some of our best-known filmmakers and artists. And in economic terms, it helps grow the market, both domestic and export, for Canadian culture. Surrey, British Columbia, for example, is fast becoming a breeding ground for India's most popular new groups such as Mantra, feeding the Bhangra pop craze in India.

So when walk the streets of Toronto, or Vancouver or Montreal, it is impossible not to notice this mix and blend of old and new. The Old Canada was proud of its military role in the two World Wars and its association with England and the Queen. The old Canada was entrepreneurial (Hudson's Bay), energetic (Railroad) but it was also protective, fiercely Euro-centric. In 1961, 40 per cent of Canadians said that we should prevent the immigration of non-whites. Today, almost no one holds such views. Whether or not we are simply being politically correct does not undermine how far we have come in our attitudes on race.

This diversity of race, perspectives, life styles and perspectives brings with it its own unique challenges. How do we define ourselves as one nation when we are constantly absorbing people who do not share a history with us, or subscribe to our values or to our aspirations and

assumptions. There are the stresses of strangeness on all sides, learning to live alongside people who dress, live, think and act differently from us. Is this a problem? Quite the opposite says Pico Iyer It is in fact the basis of our glory – as a nation we are a constantly shifting work in progress. He defines Canada as a global soul. “As a nation we are free from expectation, because we are willing to experiment, and are therefore the best guide to the creation of a new stained glass society.” He lauds our capacity to mix old and new and create a special place between global beings and the global society around them.

Less poetic but equally relevant are the observations of Mark Starowicz, the creator of a People’s History of Canada. “Canada is consistently cranky, litigious, in perpetual living negotiation of its constituent parts. When are we going to settle this, he asks. The answer of course is never. And that is not a problem. In fact, that is exactly the point”.

But there are other answers that lend us some comfort, that we are more by accident, than by design on the right path. One of the answers lies in the bond that each successive wave of immigrants shares with those who have gone before them and those who will come after. From the Scots to the Irish, from the black people who came to Canada as part of the Underground Railroad, to the waves of Poles, Jews, Mennonites, and Russians. From the young Chinese men who build our railroad to the young British orphans who were relocated to Canada. From the Hungarians, to the South Asians in Uganda, from the Sikhs, the Italians, and the Portuguese, to the Vietnamese and the people from the Caribbean. Wave after wave of people, coming in search of protection and safety and above all, the search for a better life. Mark Starowicz again is right when he observes: “ In a sense we are all boat people. We just got here at different times. “

Canada is made of a hundred different histories that have collectively shaped our identity. But there is a common thread that ties us all together – we all have the same dreams and

aspirations, we all set our hopes on this new country, and we all have starring role in the same three-part story of “ exodus, endurance and then redemption”. (Mark Starowicz). There is healthy immigrant DNA that courses through our veins.

Another answer that we are indeed on the right path lies in our young people, who best embody new values and attitudes. They are the children of the boomers, and are distinguished by two key characteristics. First, they are multi-faceted or as Irshad Manji says “mobile free agents. They have grown up with multiculturalism and have learned to mix and remix their identity rather than restrict themselves to any one any one title, label or role”. They identify both as Canadians and with their inherited ethnic identity. They are just as comfortable eating hot dogs and sushi, playing baseball and cricket, watching Hollywood or Bollywood. Almost no one under the age of 30 thinks that ethnic identity is important when choosing a spouse, a partner or a friend. They will date, marry and hang out with people from all kinds of backgrounds. Their work team will be comprised of Indians, Chinese, Japanese and Irish. Their boss most likely will be a woman.

Canada goes down a pretty unique path here. This tells us how different we are from the States. In the States for example, a full 30% of Americans say that whites and blacks should not marry. The figures are even higher in France, Britain and Italy. In Canada we are creating a new multiracial, multicultural boundary-free ethnic group called Canadian.

Possibly because of all of these factors, despite enormous changes in population diversity, Canada has not yet experienced the kind of right wing backlash of other countries. We are also blessed with a solid foundation of policies – starting with our Charter, the Human Rights International Agreements that we are party to, our multiculturalism policies and our citizenship

act. Unlike the US, an immigrant can and I hope will one day become the leader of our nation. A refugee today is the Governor General of Canada. We require a relatively short period of “incubation” before we grant Canadian citizenship. We do not differentiate between people born here and people naturalized. We provide settlement supports and have a mature social safety net that is available to immigrants as well as to other Canadians.

That's the good news. We have lots working for us.

But there is bad news as well. There are more rich people in Canada today; there are also more poor people who are more poor. And in large urban centers, poor people are more and more signified by their colour. It is taking longer and longer for immigrants to catch up to the average Canadian wage rate – and since more and more immigrants are visible minorities, we seem to be creating a society where wealth, privilege and opportunity are signified by the colour of one's skin. This is of course not new – but in the 80s immigrants were able to catch up the Canadian average wage rate within 10 years, in the 90s and 2000s, it is taking longer. This despite the fact that they are younger and better educated than ever before. Six of 10 skilled immigrants are forced to make a downwardly mobile shift into a career or job other than the one that they were qualified for. The story of the doctor or engineer or lawyer who is driving a taxi or working in a pizza parlour or factory has become part of our urban mythology. Of course all this is taking place when we are experiencing significant skills shortages – we need doctors, nurses, teachers, pharmacists, construction workers.

There are some very complex answers that this audience is mindful of: jurisdiction, roles and responsibilities, relations with provinces, etc. etc.

But I believe there is a more fundamental reason which goes back to history, attitudes and behaviours. That very immigrant DNA that I talked about has conditioned us to think just one way, and only the one way about immigrants. Our image of the immigrant is frozen in time. It is a fairly romantic post second world war image - give me your poor, your huddled, your masses, work hard and your children shall succeed. . We continue to sanction implicitly that the first generation of immigrants will pay for the success of the second. This is after all the mythology of immigrants. We defer our own dreams so that our children may realize theirs. Powerful as this argument is, it fails to take into account two powerful forces of this century – first the changing patterns of world migration and second the competition for the skilled immigrants by other countries.

Beyond distribution of wealth and opportunities, there are other signs that should concern us. Positions of power and privilege, the faces of our leaders and champions continue to reflect the Old Canada. Our institutions still breathe the rarified air of post-colonial attitudes. The people who sit around the boardrooms of the bastions of power do not reflect the people who live in communities. Organizations, private and public, that boast great participation in their work force by immigrants and minorities have made little inroads into sharing management positions with them.

These two factors should be of grave concern to us. The persistent poverty of a large group of individuals, who feel they were made a promise, whether implicitly or explicitly, that Canada is the golden land of opportunity. Who feel that there were first seduced and then abandoned. Who do not see their faces reflected in the faces of these who lead our society and our institutions. Where one can make a reasonable conclusion that it cannot always be a question of competency, but that it is most certainly a question of race. This is not the way to build a nation.

Diversity is strength, but it can quickly become our Achilles heel. Robert Putnam in his theories of social capital alludes to these dangers, describing societies that are more diverse as also being less trusting. These are the societies do not eat together, sit down with neighbours, throw fewer dinner parties, in essence societies that “ bowl alone”. Are we becoming that society?

So in a nutshell, we have a story that is good, bad and ugly. The good is clearly the energy and vibrancy that new people with new ideas bring to us enabling us to think outside the box in creating new products, new industries, and new cultural paradigms. The Good is our common national narrative with which we all share a bond. The Bad is that we seem to have lost our groove, we are no longer able to live up to the promise of Canada to the newest immigrants and are apparently losing up to 4.1 Billion dollars a year. (Conference Board of Canada).

And the ugly is of course truly ugly – it is the underbelly of racism, that denies opportunities to individuals and communities because they are different from the dominant power, because they have a different religion or the colour of their skin is black, or yellow or brown.

On this last point of Racism, let me diverge for a moment from my theme to take this opportunity to tell you how viscerally, deeply and passionately my community feels about Air India. The Air India disaster was the single largest terrorist on Canadians in history. 331 lives were lost, 80 of them children. 278 were either Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. Yet, our government chose to treat it as an Indian problem, a problem of interethnic strife between immigrant communities. The Indian officials were there because it was an Indian plane; the US officials were there because 20 US citizens perished. The Irish overwhelmed with their generosity and compassion. But Canada was absent – showing up only after a family member openly burst out to a TV journalist. . The question we are bound to ask ourselves then, is it

because we are less Canadian and because we are not white. Would this have happened if it was a plane load of white families?

The time for justice has obviously come and gone, but we have a right to the truth. We deserve to know whether the slip-ups by the various Canadian law and order agencies were simply a series of random mistakes, or whether it was systemic indifference related possibly to the racial origin of the victims. Choices we make in this respect, and in other similar instances (Maher Arar, Ipperwash etc), have far reaching ramifications for defining the type of society we want and prospects for future prosperity and social harmony.

A public inquiry in the Air India case is absolutely essential. If we believe in a just society, then all Canadians hyphenated or otherwise, should be demanding such an enquiry.

By and large the South Asian community is a quiet community, we like to go about our business without calling too much attention to ourselves. This issue is problematical for us in many ways because we now have to learn to call attention to ourselves. But there is a silver lining. We are learning that democracy belongs to those who claim it for their own, not to those who sit on the sidelines. We have possibly sat out in the sidelines too long and need to learn, uncomfortable as it may be for some of us, to call attention to our issues, our problems and our solutions and to demand action. And on this particular issue, you will not be able to wish us away. The Japanese in Canada had their internment, the Chinese their Head Tax, and now it seems that South Asians will have Air India to weave into their national narrative.

There are two stories on immigration and the story is different based on who tells the story. First, there is the story that Canada likes to tell: we are a welcoming society, we are tolerant and multicultural, we are a land of opportunity. Come to us, and whilst we cannot promise that things will be rosy right away, over time things will work out. People settle down and find their place.

The story as told by the immigrant, who is a mature adult, healthy, anywhere between his/her 30s and 40s is different. He/she is injected into an economy where the entry point is at the bottom; he/she is forced to compete with young university graduates. The immigrant therefore sees Canada not as a land of opportunity, but a land where he/she experiences rejection and discrimination and loss of face – a land of broken promises.

“So there are two views of the same phenomena - one view is that inclusion happens, but there are some marginal barriers. The other feels exclusion with little hope for inclusion”.

(Mohammad Qadri).

How do we close this gap and create a common and successful narrative in Canada. How do we then retain and enhance the good and turn the bad and ugly into the bold and beautiful.

What matters to immigrants is not hugely different from matters to all Canadians. They are interested in the very same things, but perhaps with some variations in timing. In the beginning it is a job to feed the family and a home to call their own. In the slightly longer term it still boils to the basics – success at work, home ownership, a bright future for their children and a share in building this society. Immigrants are naturally more interested in foreign policy and foreign aid – their remittances back to their home countries total 5 times the total envelope of foreign aid.

They are very interested in anything to do with education, particularly post secondary education; one needs only to look at the last names of graduating classes of universities to understand this.

They are avid users of public transportation. They tend to underutilize Employment Insurance and Welfare. Recent studies from Nova Scotia tell us that they tend to also underutilize the health care system.

What matters to us a nation then must reflect these patterns and interests, but must also take us many steps closer to our ongoing task of nation building. We can do this by focusing on two important questions that are both important to immigrants and to Canada.

The first is how can we leverage the value added proposition that skilled immigrants bring to this country for themselves and for us and second, how can we deal with the more complex and problematical issues of social cohesion and social inclusion on the one hand and racism on the other. If unaddressed, these are issues that have the potential to tear our nation apart.

As I noted earlier, our foundation of policies is right but the house needs a new coat of paint and new windows and new hard wood floors. Our old programs and policies need to be refreshed with a new perspective for a new population, which is different in significant ways. It is better educated than before, it is younger than before – it is not prepared to put its own dreams and aspirations on hold and live vicariously through the success of the second generation. Middle class economies in China and India are booming and they are in demand both back home and by other countries on the prowl for talent. We also need to acknowledge the intersection of immigration and race. It is important to understand that not all immigrants are the same. If you are a refugee from Croatia, then life is an uphill battle, but if you are a refugee from Rwanda the mountain before you takes on sharper contours. An immigrant who is not a racial minority faces fewer challenges. Since more than 75% of immigrants are visible minorities today, it seems only reasonable to put race at the heart of our search for a new policy perspective.

As a first step, I would encourage us to turn the mirror on ourselves. We cannot simply expect the immigrant to change, to adjust to adapt without asking ourselves, our society, our institutions and our systems to do so, and do so with integrity, sincerity and discipline. In terms of government, then this means that immigration and settlement, multiculturalism and anti racism, inclusion and cohesion are not the business of one or two departments but the business of all departments. It is a whole government responsibility that values diversity for innovation above all. Our objective should not be to make people look and think like us, our objective should be enrich our thinking by enabling us to look at problems differently and find different solutions. Richard Florida has talked about this in the “Rise of the Creative Class”.

Second, I want to talk about Place because Place Matters. This is something that I am coming to appreciate more and more as I travel the country as a member of the PMs task force on cities, communities, (nooks, crannies and villages). Canada as represented by a meeting of federal and provincial deputy ministers is an old concept of the country. Most Canadians live in cities (80%). Most of them live in the four big urban regions. By 2020 this will be even more so, with the Toronto region being 14-15 million people, or about half of the population of Canada. Montreal, with 5-6 million people, will be the second biggest. That gap of 8-10 million people will be staggering, and will have to be reflected in how government is structured in Canada.

Place matters and it matters particularly to immigrants because their first experiences of inclusion or rejection, welcome or hostility are likely to influence their life. Above all, their first experience of citizenship, or participation, of claiming this democracy for their own will be in a city. Cities have to some extent exhibited a fair amount of nimbleness in responding to the context of new populations, without of course having any say in it. When a mosque was being built in Toronto, there was no bylaw that covered the special structure of a spire. Our bylaws only accommodated church steeples with clock towers. Officials quickly realized the absurdity

of a mosque tower with a clock and amended the city bylaw to accommodate spires of mosques, and temples. In Markham Ontario, when a local bank was renovating, it realized that it made sense to lower the height of the bank counters to accommodate the more typical height of a local resident who was Asian. But as we know, local governments have no role, no capacity at this point to work with other orders of government to coordinate local responses that mitigate either the fall out or benefit from the generosity of Canada's immigration policies, whichever way you look at it. Large urban centers and regional economies need to be at the table on the question of immigration and settlement. It makes sense to follow the principle of subsidiarity: – that the order of government closest to the people is the best position to deliver services to it.

But Ottawa is so far away from the people. It is too small a city and place to be the nexus of power. Urban Canada is not understood in Ottawa. The inflexibility of structure and increasingly centralized decision making contradict current realities. The timidity of your processes no doubt heightened by the demands of accountability, hinder action and threaten to render the government irrelevant. Increasingly, people are not able to rely on government to be a timely, predictable, or dependable partner. When even the smallest decision has to be run up the ladder and back down for decisions, and runs the risk of being modified at every step of the way, time is wasted and relationships weakened. The separation of authority and accountability is hugely problematic. Who has the authority to select immigrants to come into Canada – clearly the Canadian government; who is accountable – clearly nobody and everybody. And so we continue down the path of fragmentation.

Is it impossible for Ottawa to imagine a new way of doing business, away from the command and control style? Can it think of creating relationships that are by defined by local realities, that start by bringing all the players to the table, where Ottawa is an enabler, a convenor, a key but

not the only player. Where the table can look to Ottawa for some solutions but not all, where the ideas come from local employers, local universities and residents and where Ottawa plays a complementary role, instead of the starring role. Let me give you an example. In Toronto, a group of local citizens, concerned about the slow decline of the city came together two years ago. As one of their first steps, they recognized that the prosperity of the city region could only be assured if it's newest residents could have a share in it. So they created a regional table, they invited the region's top employers, all the post secondary institutions, occupational regulatory bodies, immigrants, their leaders and their agencies and all levels of government – different federal departments, different provincial departments and a host of local municipalities in the GTA. Together they set out to craft and implement solutions. They launched Canada's first internship program for immigrants which provides immigrants with the much needed Canadian work experience; they created a region wide occupation specific mentoring partnership with employers, so that immigrants have access to a broader pool of occupational social capital, they launched an initiative that helps employers figure out what they need to do differently, what tools and processes they need to be looking at so that they are ready to for the work force to today and tomorrow. They recruited an influential chair, none other than Dominic D'Alessandro, the CEO of Manulife, who wrote and published an open letter to the Prime Minister giving him six concrete suggestions as to how the federal government can expedite the integration of skilled immigrants. They will soon launch a powerful television and print ad campaign in the city region encouraging employers to hire immigrants. And they created a special table for all representatives of government, federal, provincial, municipal crossing both the horizontal and vertical divide. Over the course of the last 18 months these government partners have moved from being introduced to one another to sharing a common vision for the region and developing a whole new culture of intergovernmental cooperation – all without formal agreements or

treaties. It is an example of where government officials have found the capacity to do more and better with what they have, instead of limiting the conversation with jurisdiction.

This local initiative is creating waves throughout the country. Waterloo, Ottawa, Calgary, Vancouver and Halifax are all interested in emulating this model.

This is just one example of how communities have found the sweet spot between a national framework and local flexibility. Ottawa can and must find new ways of connecting to local and regional communities and staying relevant, it must change from playing a monopoly game of power into becoming a powerful broker of relationships, with the capacity to collaborate, convene, integrate, research, communicate and so provide relevant timely appropriate leadership and services. A key lesson coming out of this and possibly other initiatives: First, the old boys network no longer serves us well. We need to tap into new networks that are being created. Ottawa is well advised to connect to local NGOs who are at the heart of such initiatives. But Ottawa also needs to invest field staff with greater authority to connect to the right people to make the right decisions and not hamper them by a lack of delegate authority. It is possibly time to change and adapt the famous all-Canadian by line from “Peace Order and Good Government to Peace Order and Good Governance”.

Our second question was the more complicated one of social cohesion. I am not sure that it is healthy for Canada to have three or four large urban centers that are multicultural, and look feel think and act differently from the rest of Canada. In my travels with the PMs task force, I have come to appreciate the need for mid sized communities like Halifax to recruit entrepreneurs and other skilled workers, and for small rural communities to recruit pharmacists, nurses and doctors. Notwithstanding their need, I do not believe that any artificial social engineering will have any

lasting impact. People will only stay as long as contractual obligations extend or until any incentive runs out. Instead, these communities need to create their own welcome packages. My cousin doctor story.

Along with our urban rural divides, we are geographically diverse, and we are a young nation, it is easy for us to describe ourselves along lines that divide us rather than those that join us, as Quebecers, as Westerners, as Native Indians, as Easterners, as visible minorities or as immigrants, as rich or poor. But we are first and foremost Canadians. Among other things, a cohesive country can only be one where people can see themselves reflected at all levels of society. I know that children will look for role models in their teachers, and if their teachers are all one hue – well then, they will make some assumptions about themselves and their own capacity. And I also know of elementary schools in Malton and Rexdale, where the only white face in the school is the face of the teacher. I know I feel a little bit more Canadian every time I see Adrienne Clarkson officiating as our Governor General, when I hear of Rohinton Mistry being nominated for prizes.

This is part of the human condition - we need to see our faces reflected in the faces of those who lead us, who teach us who speak out for us. Notwithstanding that visible minorities make up 13.4% of our population today, their share on corporate boards is less than 1.7%. They make up about 7.8% of the federal public service. They are not represented in other places of power and privilege at any substantive level. In terms of Federal Agencies and Commissions, the record of the federal government is not particularly stellar. If our institutions are the best mirrors of society, then the faces that stare back at me, does not reflect our urban reality. Besides the IRB which has garnered a number of VMs and immigrants there are probably no more than a handful of full time appointments.

This does not make good business sense for business or for governments, because the problems that we face today - environment, poverty, and health - are complex. The leadership we need to address these problems requires creativity and the skill to reach across boundaries - geographic, religious, ethnic and philosophical - to bring together broad and increasingly diverse. I like to take an example from the world of pop culture, the TV series Starstruck. For those who are trekkies in the audience, you will recognize the plot line of every show. There is an incident, which culminates into a huge crisis. The future of a planet, or a community or even the mother ship is at stake. The problem appears unsolvable, but the creativity of the team succeeds in solving it. The crew of the Starship Enterprise are officers of many races, ethnicities, genders and even species. It is more than good luck and a great ship that allows the Enterprise to respond swiftly and effectively to all those challenges. It is the varied talents, histories and cultural experiences that give the crew a unique advantage. In every episode of Star Trek, dialogue around very different strategies is encouraged, and decision making is considered based on likely implication, resources, tactics and ethical considerations. Without that diverse crew, they would have been blown to bits in the first episode – Game Over in show one.

So diversity for business reasons, diversity for solutions seeking reasons, but finally and most importantly diversity for social cohesion. Immigrants are the most loyal of Canadian subjects – I speak as one who will celebrate 25 years of life in Canada this year, and I urge you to not overlook us or take us for granted. In Toronto, we have created a web-based directory of ready able and willing candidates who are visible minorities – searchable by skills and competencies. We call it abcGTA – possibly a model for a national program. This is a simple idea whose time has come.

And finally, let me deal with the most difficult and painful subject of all. Racism. This is too complicated to address in any one speech, so I will confine myself to one expression of it and

that is the persona today of the Federal public Service. I don't need to make the case. Lewis Perinbaum has made the case for you in a landmark report. I will simply repeat what he has said.

"The federal public service does not reflect the public it serves. It has failed to meet its legislated employment equity goals. There is no government wide commitment and leadership and no accountability."

Under the terms of the Employment Equity Legislation, business does a lot better. Banking employs a full 18.4% of visible minorities, the Communications Industry 11.6%. Compare that to your performance of 7.8%.

This leads us to an obvious question – if they can do it, why can't the government?

Gordon Nixon, the CEO of the Royal Bank is also the Chair of its Diversity Leadership Council. He takes diversity seriously “ Not just because it s the right thing to do, but because it is good for business.”

But as the federal public service, you in fact have a higher bar to meet than simply those of a business. On you lies the onus for setting the pace that the rest of society can follow. As you have done in the past – with women and with francophones. And as you must do now and in the future with minorities. No service organization, least of all government, can provide relevant and appropriate service without understanding its public. You need to do so and do so quickly.

I think you already know what needs to be done, I have seen the reports from Professor Mendes, have seen the good practice models set up by some of your agencies, such as the CRTC. I have seen the recommendations of Lewis Perinbaum. You know have a problem; you also know what some of the solutions are. Is it then a case of the spirit being willing, but the flesh being weak?

Only enlightened leadership can rectify this. Not just leadership at the top, but leadership at all levels, charged with benchmarks, accountable for performance, invested with the capacity and

with the incentives to be innovative, to celebrate results and speak frankly about challenges.

Leadership that sets out a proactive timetable and checks in with regular reports. I believe I am speaking to exactly the right audience of leaders

So instead of telling you what needs to be done, I will instead leave you with a dream and a fond wish.

In a galaxy far far away, there is ship called Starship Canada. It is a vibrant mother ship, with a host of strong urban satellites, it has new intergalactic networks that connect it to these urban satellites and the traffic runs briskly both ways; it is a place where difference is an asset, where teams are purposefully created to include different races, perspectives, skills and capacities, so as proactively generate innovation and solution seeking. Its captain today is Captain Himmelfarb, but in the not too far away future, he sees a Captain Chow or Captain Singh following him.

If I had my wish, Scottie would beam us all up there today! In the meantime, I wish you all the very best. Thank you very very much.