

That project would be a high speed train from Quebec to Windsor. Some might question the need for this, but I believe that if it is done properly, we would see Canadians take a renewed interest in rail transit which would reduce pressures on other infrastructure and pollution. The Constitutional question will remain unanswered until someone steps forward with a clear vision of where this country is going to convince and reassure both Quebec and the rest of Canada that we have a good thing.

### **Ontario:**

Mike Harris is leading an economic rebirth. His supply side economics is working well. He has cut taxes and the increased disposable income seems to be pumped right back into the economy. However, some economists believe that if they had done nothing, Ontario would be in a surplus situation. By running a deficit in an economic upswing, the Conservatives have set themselves up for a major fall if a downturn should occur suddenly (see Bob Rae-NDP). All of Southern Ontario is booming and it is attracting people from both inside and out of the country. On a federal level, they need to take the lead in becoming a major voice for Canada rather than a "what's in it for Ontario" Harris view. A good start would be a renewed emphasis on bilingualism. And perhaps try to take economic advantage out of the dual language component on a

global scale!

### **Prairies:**

In Manitoba, the primary concern is the farm crisis. I have written before about its economic component but there is also a social one. The Prairies are what they are today because of farmers and the sacrifices they were willing to make. This sector used to represent a lot of jobs to the economy but today streamlining has taken its toll. I think there has to be renewed national emphasis as to the merits of farming and the need to make it economically affordable for a broad range of people. There is certainly no shortage of land in our country for this. If Manitoba could economically reposition the port of Churchill, they would spatially spread their economic wealth around as well. It would also be great to see the province take the lead in the aviation sector again (Hello Bombardier). Politically, I would like to see Manitoba take a more traditional, accommodating New Brunswick type approach to Federal affairs because of its French heritage (which now exists in a multicultural environment). The danger is for it to take a regional approach that the west wind blows in too.

Saskatchewan and Alberta share a lot of similarities. A reliance on farming, resources, and oil is the envy of the rest of the country. Both are diversifying and have low unemployment rates. Provincially, Roy

Romanow is now in a minority government while Alberta's Ralph Klein remains popular. Sask. is also in a unique position of having the majority of the world's known potash. Like any unique resource they should attempt to research as many uses for it as possible to take full advantage of their monopoly position in having it. Alberta is a great symbol of what Canada is all about. Cold winters, beautiful landscapes, and enormous economic wealth. The hardy people that inhabit these lands have had to turn to a regional party to have their voice heard nationally. They are heavy subsidisers of our nation and should hence have more of a say than they have had to date. The population differences that prevent this might be best overcome politically by using an institution in place, like the Senate. By ceding some powers to it and creating an equal representation component, their voice might be better heard. For the economic future is bright here and holds many benefits to all Canadians.

### **British Columbia:**

For the love of God give these people honest government. Scandals have plagued this province for far too long and threaten to become ingrained as acceptable to the provincial psyche. Things are certainly different on the left coast. Only here could the Reform and NDP share federal waters. The physical nature of the Rockies creates a tangible

isolation that can easily become interpreted as alienation. It is difficult to combat this as well as perceived eastern indifference. What is required is effort. What this province does not need are any more super projects. The way they built a superferry makes Montreal's effort to build the Olympic Stadium look like cautious money management. The mountains have also provided easy wealth that has felt the brunt of global price fluctuations. If they can emphasize the use of their port in the same way as Halifax, these effects will be somewhat diminished. The gate way to the Far East will remain secure.

### **North:**

The way our planet is warming up, this place could be the next millennium's Jamaica. So get your real estate now although I would have to advise against inhabitation presently. The North contains an equally large amount of economic wealth and social ills. Climate factors into both and perhaps even to how they resolve themselves. Giving autonomy to certain areas is a good way to begin addressing these problems as well. The one major concern is that that autonomy does not come back for future handouts. Having it both ways won't work.

### **Canada:**

Nationally, things have not been this good since the 1960s. We have pulled ourselves out of a fiscal mess and now stand

poised to renew the social safety net that was so close to being dismantled in order to pay our creditors. Federalism itself has become highly decentralized with provinces gaining quite a bit of power. Personally, I would rather see a more centralized government to ensure that standards exist for all Canadians on a consistent basis. Its biggest problems now are Constitutional. How to give the west a better say and a reason for Quebec to stay, are the biggest ones. However, I believe most of these could be resolved if some power was given to the Senate and that body was reformed to take on an appearance like the American Senate. This realignment of power must come from powers held by both Ottawa and the provinces which would be no small sell. The utility of it would be the only way to sell it to the voting public. Create equal representation in a reformed federal state might be one avenue to regenerate interest and faith in our countries government. This will take imagination, vision and will which are lacking at almost every level of government presently. As a people I believe we need to return to a new period of civility and respect amongst ourselves. Things are almost getting out of control and if it continues this country is in danger of imploding. But in government, like anywhere else, leadership is from the top down. Without it, things could turn dark. And when things are dark I've been known to fall... GONZO OUT