

NUMBER 24/ AUGUST 1994

VISIONING THE NEW ECONOMY IN THE
ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST:
A SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE

*Prepared by Edward J. (Ted) Chambers
Director of the Western Centre for Economic Research
and the
Centre for International Business Studies, University of Alberta.*

Continental trading arrangements such as the FTA, and now NAFTA, remove national restrictions on the flow of goods, services, and capital, and naturally reinforce continental economic, social and financial arrangements. The significance of national boundaries is reduced and that of regional trans-border regions is increased through these arrangements. Regional ties are promoted by increased economic access among spatially proximate populations, and commonalities that historically have been obscured by the international border resurface. The greater depth and breadth of resulting exchange relationships bring into focus the social, economic, and environmental interdependencies that exist in the trans-border region. Within this

general pattern nothing is certain and therefore questions are appropriately asked about the potential of the region. Rocky Mountain West trans-border institutional structures in which a regional future can be investigated and plotted are in their infancy. New platforms that will contribute to these regional interests and their positive development are slowly emerging.

Believing that universities are ideally suited to initiate discussions that think afresh across national boundaries in regional space, the University of Alberta and the University of Montana jointly sponsored a Conference in Edmonton on June 12-13 with the theme 'Visioning the New Economy in the Rocky Mountain West'. This meeting is the second in a series, the first of which occurred in June of 1992

on the the University of Montana campus in Missoula with the theme the 'New Economic Regionalism in the Rocky Mountain West'. The purpose of this second conference like the first was not to find solutions to problems but to increase mutual recognition of the issues in the region. This Information Bulletin contains a summary of the presentations at the Conference.

The keynote speaker was Neal Peirce of the *Washington Post* Group, a person who has written widely on the subject of 'city-states', their role in regional and urban development, and the interdependencies between

metropolitan nodes and the regions surrounding them. The first afternoon of the Conference Program also contained an Issues Study Forum made up of 14 public and private sector leaders from both sides of the border. On the second day there were panels on the impact of the FTA on the Rocky Mountain Region; issues in native labour market training; yield versus volume in tourism; growth and decline among Rocky Mountain towns and urban centres; lessons from other trans-border regional arrangements; issues in transportation; and issues in communication.

NEAL PEIRCE

Peirce emphasizes the re-emergence of the city-state as one of the major developments of the modern era. He defines the city-state as "a region of one or more historic central cities surrounded by one or more towns which have a shared identification, constitute a single zone for trade, commerce, and communication, and are characterized by social, economic, and environmental interdependence. Modern city-states, unlike the city-states of antiquity or medieval times, engage in instant electronic communication and capital transfer, and are the chief recipients of world population growth". He suggested that national economies are really constellations of regional economies with city-states at their core, and dependent upon them as the engines of economic growth. The urban area is a source of economic power and a number of these are clearly present in the Rocky Mountain West: Calgary, Edmonton, Salt Lake City, Boise, and Denver. But he also suggested that this tentative definition allows us to visualize city-states that span international boundaries as in the Seattle-Vancouver or the Toronto-Buffalo complexes. In adopting the definition, key decision makers within a major urban area must strive to understand the central city in terms that be quite novel to them. For example, they must come to think of the city as part of a much larger regional complex, to think creatively about the extent and nature of the interdependence with its rural neighbors, and to consider how explosive population growth might be diverted in a management way to less affluent rural areas. To positively deal with this complicated set of inter-relationships will require collective

intelligence and good planning by a city to maintain its globally competitive position.

Peirce was quick to point out that he is not predicting the imminent demise of the nation state, nor their fading away any time soon. Nation states have a constitutional basis, are responsible for defense, control the currency, and are the providers of social safety nets. Their continuing presence, however, does not negate the fact that they have lost some measure of sovereignty. This is evident in continental agreements such as NAFTA and the European Community, together with the end of the Cold War which had a unifying influence. Economically, regions will rely less on national governments, even on provincial or state governments, whose financial circumstances no longer permit levels of funding that in the past have frequently rescued regions from decay or stagnation.

For Peirce the most basic question in the new social, economic and technological environment is how those living in the city-state choose to shape their future. The new conditions point to regions assuming the primary responsibility for addressing the question, and to do this effectively they will need to see themselves as natural entities, developing their own strategies, and attending carefully to their own business. The process of realizing the city-state will be difficult, involved, and require extensive participation in the planning process. Major matters that must be addressed in the process include: the preservation of historic city centres and neighborhoods; some kind of growth pact

between city centres and suburban areas and some understanding of how post-suburban development is to occur; mobilization of the human resource strengths of the region on which global competitiveness depends; and a recognition that local government efficiency is an indicator of international competitiveness.

In conclusion Peirce recognized that much of the future dynamism of city-states would come from entrepreneurial initiative in small business. He suggested that the viability of a city-state could not rest upon the service sector alone but would require a viable manufacturing sector. Small business growth in this sector could be fostered through networks of small manufacturing firms, similar to those that have emerged in Denmark and the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy were particularly appealing ways of adding value to raw resource products, enhancing international competitiveness, and increasing a positive interdependence within the domain of the city-state.

The panel responding to Neal Peirce's presentation consisted of Daniel Kemmis, Mayor of Missoula, Montana, Jerry Nagel, Executive Director of the Red River Trade Corridor who is based in Crookston, Minnesota, and Rod Ziegler, business columnist of the Edmonton Journal.

Kemmis felt that Peirce had understated the global importance of the re-emergence of the city-state which he accepted as a major phenomenon of our time. Globalization really means that the world is restructuring itself along organic rather than political lines, thereby undermining the importance of nationalism. While the city-state as outlined by Peirce is an organic entity, the nation state is not. He suggested that the concept of the city-state is not about the balkanization of North America, nor is it about establishing a new level of government. Rather the focus is on people sharing a common interest whether social, economic, or

environmental, coming together to find actions that they can take together in their mutual self-interest.

Nagel pointed out that 50 collaborative trans-border regional arrangements exist in Europe. He applied Peirce's concepts to his own experience in the Red River Corridor which is a trans-border rural region encompassing portions of Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota functioning within the purview of Minneapolis-St. Paul and Winnipeg. While the former is the dominant economic force, it is clear that the two affect each other. Nagel agreed with Peirce on the question of the diminishing importance of national governments. Increasingly in his view, decision making will move up to the continental level, and the responsibility for implementation will move down to the local level. In considering the question of how a region plans its future, Nagel referred to experience in the Red River Corridor. Economic developers from local communities have come together to 'vision' the region. These economic developers are clear about the importance of background research into such matters as assembling a systematic profile of labour force characteristics. Collaboration has been voluntary based on recognition of the mutual advantage to be gained from working together.

Ziegler expressed doubts about the city-state being superior to the nation state as a viable economic agent. He summarized his reservations about the erosion of the nation state, pointing to impacts of trade barriers. Ziegler further identified a series of political, economic, and geographic barriers to collaboration that must be taken into account when considering the utility of the city-state notion.. He asked how we go about establishing new institutional arrangements which serve to break down these barriers, and facilitate a greater degree of collaborative effort.

CASE STUDY FORUM: DEFINING THE REGION'S FUTURE

The Case Study Forum was moderated by the Hon. Jim Edwards a former federal Cabinet Minister and member of the Canadian House of Commons. The forum was made up of 14 private and public sector panelists, drawn from both sides of the international border.

One of the issues explored by the panel was the inter-relationship between land use, sustainable development, business decisions and employment. Harvey Locke, a lawyer with the Calgary firm of MacKimmie Matthews, saw the Rocky Mountains as a globally precious resource in which land use had to be based on an ecological reality: that the eastern slopes of the Rockies from Colorado through Jasper was one giant eco-system in which the 49th parallel exists only as an artificial line. Locke emphasized that the economic health of the area was dependent on maintaining the beauty and natural abundance of the region.

Ray Rasker of the Wilderness Society in Bozeman thought Canada further ahead than the United States in discussion of the sustainable development concept. He presented five principles of 'sustainable development' found useful in focusing discussion at the community level: renewability; substitution; interdependence; adaptability; and institutional commitment. In speaking of the interdependence principle he referred to the situation in Bozeman, a community now experiencing a very rapid influx of high tech industry. The attraction is the quality of the environment, ie. the presence of a university together with the scenic beauty of the area. But the latter has had an impact on those who rely on logging and the question has become "how can we log in a way that does not have a negative impact on new age industry that came because of the scenery"? He pointed out that for some rapidly expanding Rocky Mountain centres there is neither promotion nor prevention of growth, but rather the problem is seen as one of managing growth to protect the quality of life. This new premium on scenic beauty is not without complication since those who rely on logging for a livelihood are often put at odds with those who value the scenic aesthetic. The policy question confronting public and corporate decision makers is "how can we log in a way that does not have a

negative impact on new age industry that came because of the scenery?"

Ray Cej of Shell Canada in Calgary expressed the view that natural resource industries which have been the source of much wealth in the region, would continue to have an important economic role. Referring to the oil and gas industry Cej stated that new technology will lead to new finds in the region and to an extension of the life of reserves. Much of that new technology coupled with improved management practices has served to sustain the environment while maintaining the economic health of the industry. Practices such as horizontal drilling, common rights of way, facility site selection, mitigation of emissions and ground water contamination, improved waste management, and restoration are all examples of the positive changes which have occurred. Michael Percy of the University of Alberta and a member of the Alberta Legislature agreed with Cej. He felt that any transition in the region's economy would be gradual, and that resource industries would continue to be important wealth generators. He emphasized that a role of government is to facilitate more value added activities in these industries. Percy also pointed out that resource industries employ many highly paid professional and technical personnel who contribute to the high quality of life in an area, while simultaneously being attracted to the area by this same quality of life.

Jim Scott of the First Interstate Bank in Billings suggested that judgements about sustainability as a limit to development would have to be made at the sub-regional level. He pointed to the different growth experience of the western one-third of Montana, much of it now experiencing rapid growth, and the eastern two-thirds in which many areas are actually losing population. Harry Fritz of the University of Montana and a Montana State Senator strongly agreed that differential rates of population growth and decline raises serious questions about what is happening to the region and how this kind of change can best be dealt with. He thought a great deal more knowledge was needed about the economic circumstances of immigrants to the region.

The forum also dealt with the question of what kind of economic transition might be

anticipated in the Rocky Mountain region. This topic evoked a lively, wide ranging discussion of the tourism sector. Beth Russell-Towe of Waterton, Founder of the Trail of the Great Bear Association, saw the region as unique in the world. The central question for Russell-Towe is identification of "appropriate avenues for tourism development". She saw opportunity for much trans-border activity such as GIS mapping of the entire region, identification and suitable placement of areas for multi-industry development, and the use of common research methodologies. Harvey Locke believed that any strategy must maintain the values that the region presently possesses.

Bernie Campbell of the Strategy Group in Edmonton suggested that tourism in the region is now largely oriented to volume. That emphasis has implication for both environmental sustainability, and the need to attract other industries for diversification. He felt that leaving tourism land use planning to each community will produce a checkerboard effect with some towns opening their doors wide, and others closing them up. Campbell also saw the need to sit down on a regional basis to identify the basic requirements for maintaining the eco-system and protecting the community's quality of life necessary to a broadening of the economic base. He saw the day of senior government leadership in designing plans as gone. The question is what replaces it. Dan Kemmis agreed with this point of view. He reiterated that the Rocky Mountain bio-region had global significance and that what we might do in adopting a regional approach could be looked to as an international example. Like Campbell he believed that towns were in no position to do this by themselves. Earl Fry of Brigham Young University agreed that the Rocky Mountain region has a comparative advantage for tourists in its natural landscape. While local communities are trying to do more to secure visitors, he saw the need for trans-border cooperation in order to secure fully the potential gains from the industry. Russell-Towe suggested the importance of collective marketing of tourism. Further, the industry itself offers a range of employment opportunities including those for the highly educated.

A number of panelists commented on the characteristics of the tourist industry. Hal

Walker of Stone Creek Properties in Calgary argued that in tourist development it was essential that stakeholders lay out their positions and interact. Through that process accommodations are reached. Further the tourist industry itself offers employment opportunities for those who are very highly educated to those with quite limited skills. This is not widely understood, the result of an unwarranted emphasis on low wage, poor quality labour. Gary Moseman, Publisher of the Great Falls Tribune agreed that the industry offered significant employment opportunities. Walker also stressed that from his experience large destination resorts can have a very positive impact on local business. Harry Fritz, on the other hand, expressed some scepticism. He pointed to the heavy concentration of tourist activity in Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, as well as along the I-15 and I-90 corridors. He also saw high seasonality as a continuing problem for the industry. Fritz stated that if adventure tourism is a direction in which the industry is moving, then the land for this south of the border is largely under federal jurisdiction and not easily adaptable to the plans of state and local governments.

Session Moderator Jim Edwards raised the possible problems in reconciling recreational activities in the local lifestyles of community residents and the needs of an expanded tourist presence. Jim Scott considered this to be an issue. Tourism puts pressure on local amenities. He stated that discussion in local communities of the benefits versus the downside of visitors was clearly preferable to a regulatory approach. Harvey Locke saw a potential land use conflict between the ranching and tourism industries as a predictable outcome of increased tourism.

Aboriginal and cultural issues was a third topic explored by the panel. Jim Scott, speaking on avenues of economic development open to native communities, reported on the manufacturing network formed by seven Indian reservations in Montana as a positive response to declining federal government defense purchases from their reservation based enterprises. He also emphasized studies underway to better understand the economic impact of reservations on surrounding sub-regional areas. Roy Louis of the Samson-Cree Nation suggested that one concrete action would be the meeting of tribal chiefs in the region on

matters of economic development and tourism. He pointed out aboriginals are a good resource when it comes to tourism, and that reservations could be incorporated creatively into the industry's planning. Harry Fritz agreed but indicated that Native Americans have been slow to respond partly because of lack of information about and access to points of historic and cultural interest on reservations. Beth Russell-Towe suggested that trans-border native tourism working committees could be formed to identify interpretive and even spiritual experiences for tourists with these interests. She has also suggested possible tourist interest in historic trans-border differences in the dealing with "whiskey and guns". Ray Rasker agreed that the culture of the region, largely rooted in aboriginal society was a tourist attraction, though he cautioned against a "theme park" approach. Roger Belland of Canadian Heritage in Ottawa agreed with Rasker stating that the real issue is the quality and authenticity of the tourism offered.

During the forum a number of panelists raised questions about the lack of institutional structures for trans-border discussion and analysis of common problems. Belland asked "how do things get done"? He saw government as a facilitator of public consultation. Scott saw the need for new ways to get citizens involved. Moseman emphasized the importance of a regional approach. A local approach offered no long term solutions. He went on to suggest that a fundamental deficiency in trans-border regional relationships was the absence of information flows about matters pertinent to the region as a whole. He regarded improved north-south flows as an essential condition for meaningful discussion and for trans-border citizen involvement. "If people and governments are to effect a transition they will need a better understanding of what is happening on each side of the border in human terms. The mechanisms for this right now are poor," he stated.

PANEL: WHAT HAS THE FTA MEANT TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST?

A panel considered the impact of the FTA on the Rocky Mountain West. It was pointed out by the Moderator Rolf Mirus of the University of Alberta that over the past five years all of the growth in exports from Alberta and Saskatchewan has been to the U. S. market. Thus clearly the bright side to the FTA, from the Canadian perspective has been the growth in exports.

Nan Hinton of the Colorado National Bank and a member of the Executive Committee of the Rocky Mountain Trade Corridor Association brought a banker's perspective to the panel. She reported that in her contact exporters and importers she has repeatedly seen the favourable impact of the FTA. Canada is Colorado's largest foreign customer and she stated that her customers viewed Canada as an extension of their domestic market, and a place where it was relatively simple to do business. Further the FTA offered any company a good initial experience in an export market which was similar to the domestic market, and which conducted business in the same language. In sum she suggested that for her customers the FTA has brought about easier access, more jobs,

and easier business travel.

John Feick, President of Novacor Chemicals Inc., emphasized the fact that the FTA has helped in the development of a world scale petrochemical industry in Alberta, and hence in the region as a whole. More generally he saw the FTA as providing a focus for competing in the international economy. Investment in the Alberta industry amounts to about Can\$3 billion accounting for 3,000 direct jobs. Over 50% of Alberta production is sold in the U. S. market, and before the FTA tariffs on exports in an average year amounted to about Can\$50 million, and therefore the elimination of tariffs has had a substantial effect on Novacor's bottom line. He suggested that the FTA has eliminated tariffs, and also provided more secure access to the U. S. market. He saw the need for further improvement in this regard, and expressed a preference for the application of domestic competition laws rather than the use of anti-dumping, subsidy and countervail laws in both countries. Feick pointed out that in his judgment domestic policies, such as competition policy, corporate taxation, and environmental policy needed to complement the FTA. He gave

as an example the fact that since the deregulation of transportation Novacor's shipping costs have declined by 20%.

Michelle Veeman of the University of Alberta discussed the way in which agricultural trade has evolved since passage of the FTA. She pointed out that the chapter of the FTA on agriculture was limited in its scope with several sensitive areas exempted. The complexity of finding common ground in the agricultural industry is further evidenced by the fact that NAFTA contains separate agreements between Canada and Mexico, and the U. S. and Mexico, while maintaining the Canada-U. S. agricultural FTA arrangement. Veeman reported that since

the FTA Canadian shipments to the American market of live animals, meats, grains, and oil seeds had increased. Similarly U. S. exports to Canada of fruits, vegetables, red meats, grains, and oil seed products had also increased. She was careful to point that this increase in two way trade could not be solely attributed to the FTA. She regarded the recent increased frictions in agricultural trade to be a result of increased trade itself. The dispute over durum wheat she regarded as an unfortunate, a mostly political adjustment to free markets, and a result of the fact that export incentives to grain producers have created export opportunities in the American market for Canadian grain.

PANEL: COMMUNICATIONS

Ken Goldstein of Communications Management Inc. in Winnipeg stated that the Information Super Highway (ISH) is being driven by the entertainment business. He argued that there are a number of important regional issues that arise from the ISH. One of the more important of these concerns is that of the "on" and "off" ramps on the ISH. It is important for the economic vitality of a region that it be a source of information (an "on" ramp) and not just a passive recipient. Also, once there is retail access to the ISH customers will have the same information as business. This will be a problem for those who earn their living by dispensing information, but not for those who massage and otherwise add value to information.

In the realm of TV Goldstein saw significant implications for regions in the "enormous proliferation of viewing choices" in speciality channels (all news, all sports, etc.) that are cutting into the horizontal service channels. He saw this as eroding "the glue that binds us". At the regional level communications will suffer because the economics of regional broadcasting will not support specialized broadcasting, but at the national level this will be less the case since a sports channel, or an all-news channel will have sufficient market to survive. Proximity will sustain human contact at the local level. Goldstein sees the challenge at the regional level being one of identifying new kinds of media glue. Perhaps, he said, "reinventing PBS and

CBC to provide a regional focus would be a good place to start".

Jeff Baker, Montana Commissioner of Higher Education, the other panelist, asked the question where education fits into visioning about the future of the region's communications? Baker noted that in the western United States there will be a huge increase in the demand for higher education over the next 15 years as the number of 18 year olds increases by 70%. How are we to respond to that increase especially in light of the imperative of maintaining work force quality in the new members of the labour force? Agreeing with comments from a previous panel about a movement to continental policies and local actions, Baker sees visioning in higher education as a trans-border reaching out. He suggested looking at ways that higher education could be tied together along the Rocky Mountain corridor, including cross-border exchanges to rationalize education offerings. He saw the need for new organizational structures to address this kind of change, and the setting of goals with respect to cross-border efforts could contribute to their development. Public and private interests can come together in expanding educational facilities through school to work partnerships and expanded apprenticeship programs, and indicated the intention of initiating Alberta-Montana discussions in that regard.

TRANSPORTATION

Darshan Kailly, President of Canadian Freightways in Calgary, saw a crucial role for transportation in a city-state scenario. Trucking he saw playing an important role in facilitating economic transitions in the Rocky Mountain region. Technological change has radically transformed processes within the industry itself, but also the industry can accommodate very easily the delivery requirements of high tech business.

Kailly outlined a number of problems that the industry continues to address. Given the importance of both international competitiveness and sustaining the quality of the region's environment, the industry has had to develop ways of hauling more for less while simultaneously addressing environmental concerns. Another problem is congestion in core pockets of population in larger centres. Responses such as off-peak delivery hours creates problems of lifestyle change. There is a need for a serious look at alternate modes such as dirigibles, and as much use as possible of inter-modal forms of transport. Kailly emphasized the importance of lowering the unit cost along the CANAMEX corridor along the spine of the Rockies by permitting travel through several jurisdictions with one authorization.

Kailly pointed out that city-states in the region have developed their own regional carriers, and future increased efficiencies in transport will depend on a high degree of coordination between these regional carriers, intermodal forms, and regulatory standardization of equipment and safety requirements. He concluded by pointing out that within city-states an efficient transportation system was a necessary condition for realizing the interdependence of the urban concentration with surrounding satellite areas.

The second panelist was Pat Keim of the Burlington Northern Railway. He emphasized the importance of first the FTA and now NAFTA in redefining the transport of goods through the Rocky Mountain corridor from an east-west to a north-south axis. With north-south rail links presently in place he emphasized the need to accommodate the anticipated steady growth in rail-trucking partnerships with the objective of an integrated, flexible, customized, and cost effective north-south transport system. To achieve this requires uniform equipment standards for rail and trucking, a full range of rail/truck interfaces, and a streamlining of border crossing procedures. He favoured user cost maintenance of the new, improved infrastructure.

GROWTH AND DECLINE IN ROCKY MOUNTAIN TOWNS AND URBAN CENTRES

Larry Swanson of the University of Montana characterized the Rocky Mountain region as "dynamic" with population projections for the next decade indicating that it will be one of the fastest growing regions on the continent. However, the region has been characterized by very unbalanced growth with highly diverse market opportunities across space. During the last decade there have been pockets of very rapid growth, and other areas of population loss. The general pattern has been that the more rural the area, the more likely it is to record decline. Population growth has been concentrated in the most urban areas such as

Denver-Boulder, Salt Lake City, Calgary, Boise, and Edmonton. Retail trade has also been more heavily concentrated in the urban areas. Further, whatever growth in manufacturing that has taken place has also been concentrated in the more heavily populated areas. The result is more agglomeration, and this is also a reflection of a service oriented economy that requires both economic and population mass. Swanson saw the integration of urban and rural areas into a healthy whole as a future challenge within the region.

The second panelist was Graham Parsons of the University of Regina and the Canada West

Foundation. He saw information and technology flows as essential to the future of the Rocky Mountain region, and emphasized the importance of the American and Asian markets to further growth in western Canada. He stated that nearly all population and economic growth in the region north of the 49th parallel has occurred in the cities. This urban growth poses a major challenge for governments because many existing programs and policies are

oriented to traditional activities in rural areas. Parsons was in substantial agreement with Peirce when stating a rural community's survival is largely dependent on being part of a metropolitan area network and economy. He also saw the need for links between city-states themselves, and believes a trans-border information base a necessary condition for the international competitiveness of the Rocky Mountain West.

LESSONS FROM OTHER TRANS-BORDER REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Wes Jurey, President of the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce who spoke of his experience in developing the El Camino Real Trans-border Corridor encompassing a 900 kilometre stretch from Sante Fe, New Mexico to Chihuahua in Mexico with a regional GDP of about US\$40 billion. He indicated that when metropolitan areas come together for certain purposes they can become more competitive but to think regionally in this way requires considerable change. Realistically those in the Corridor recognize that cities compete but also accept the fact that there are activities where collaboration is mutually beneficial. The latter have included intermodal transport facilities, the transfer of technology, and one stop information shopping for the region. Jurey related some of the actions taken to develop a regional perspective. A strategic analysis identified the potential for collaboration. This included discovering what each city is and the mapping of industry clusters and support systems as a means of finding ways of working together. He stated one important lesson from the experience: El Camino Real resulted from collaboration among existing organizations, not by superimposing a new organization.

The second panelist was the Hon. Jim Horsman, former Deputy Premier of Alberta and now President of the Horsman Group Inc. in Medicine Hat. Horsman used Montana-Alberta Boundary Advisory Committee consisting of political representatives from the two jurisdictions as his first example of trans-border cooperation. Through the efforts of the Committee ways have been found to improve shipping across the border through joint vehicle inspection and permitting higher weight loads from the boundary to Shelby.

Horsman also discussed the Pacific Northwest Economic Region which has now become a public-private partnership to develop policies for enhancement of the the greater Pacific Northwest including Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Priorities have been designated for cooperation. These are tourism; recycled materials, environmental technology, raising labour force skills, value added wood products, telecommunications to link universities, and improved regional transportation facilities. He also pointed out that collaborative export initiatives are now underway.

ABORIGINAL / NATIVE MARKET TRAINING

The first panelist was Joe McDonald, President of the Salish/Kootenai College Pablo, Montana, a past President of the American Higher Education Indian Consortium. He indicated that Indian development initiatives in substantial degree depended on a skilled labour force and saw tribal colleges as playing a key role in providing those skills. McDonald pointed out that there are now 3,000 Native-Americans attending higher education in Montana, and 2,000 of them are enrolled at the tribal colleges. He considered some of the questions that surround native participation in economic development emphasizing the importance of an understanding of the aboriginal culture. These included maintaining a tribal identity, particularly in areas where population growth has been rapid like western Montana. Rapid growth has put pressure on reservation land. Alluding to the Case Study Forum discussion of tourism he saw ways in which aboriginals could become involved including access for tourists to reservation events while maintaining their authenticity, and venture tribal tours emphasizing history, culture, fishing, and scenery. He indicated that in his experience there remains a great need among indigenous peoples for a better

understanding of business planning and development principles. An understanding of these principles will assist the indigenous peoples to retain control over their own future.

The second panelist was Roy Louis of the Samson-Cree from Hobbema, Alberta. Louis agreed with McDonald that a good education was essential for economic development, and he emphasized the need for training in areas of business, law, and related areas. Despite some significant efforts, however, the private sector, needs to provide more incentives for skill training of native people. He pointed out that his reservation had benefitted substantially from oil and gas royalties over the past two decades, and outlined priority setting steps taken by the band to adjust to advantageous economic circumstances. In considering visioning change in the Rocky Mountain region, Louis stressed that it was important to get aboriginal people "on side". Indigenous peoples are major stakeholders in the region and, at least in Canada, land claims are a major issue. He stated that it remains difficult for natives to get their voice heard, and that forums are slow to emerge in which they can cooperatively participate with other actors in regional policy making discussions.

YIELD VERSUS VOLUME IN TOURISM

The first panelist, Bernie Campbell, summarized the traditional volume approach to tourism as building on a natural advantage, adding man made attractions, facilities, and services, and providing the necessary infrastructure. With these elements in place the destination is marketed to maximize visitation levels and revenue. As visitor volume grows so does economic impact. However, as tourist volume increases, capacities are strained putting pressure on operators to use price as an incentive to maintain volume and profit. Increased visitation and physical development also increases costs and generates a need for physical and social infrastructure. Campbell sees opportunity in the Rocky Mountain West

for development of yield based destinations, ones in which quality levels are very high and product scarcity respected. He indicated that tourist markets are becoming much more sophisticated at all levels, and they increasingly seek value and quality in combination with unique experiences. These market changes present an important opportunity for the industry in presenting the scenic, natural, and cultural aspects of the region.

The second panelist Beth Russell-Towe spoke about the Trail of the Great Bear, a concept to establish a scenic tourism corridor from Yellowstone National Park through Glacier/Waterton to Banff and Jasper. She referred to studies that recently have been

conducted that lay the groundwork for a scenic tour corridor. These, she said, underscore the importance of trans-border coordination among individuals and groups in both the public and private sectors. The success of other tourism corridors teaches the necessity of effective volunteerism and community stakeholder participation. Activities such as loop tours of

communities along a central tourist corridor become possible when local community support is mobilized within a region. Russell-Towe emphasized the need to develop new organization structures that promote community stakeholder participation and added that there is also a need for structures to affect regional trans-border cooperation.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Neal Peirce closed the Visioning Conference. He acknowledged that visioning a new economy in the region would be a difficult collaborative process. Obstacles that need to be considered in developing an action plan include vast distance and small population, difficult transport routes, the absence of common regional news media, and the fact that the emerging regional consciousness of community leaders was not widely shared.

Despite these difficulties Peirce saw substantial rewards in a cohesive regional approach. On both sides of the border the Rocky Mountain West has been subject to manipulation by large capital from elsewhere. Hence, a future oriented strategic thinking by those in the region about what is wanted is the only way to avoid being victimized. Tourism he concluded is a sector where cooperation should be both rewarding and possible, and he called for sectoral cross-regional discussions looking at

the long range future of the industry. That would require extensive participation by the public throughout the region. Development of strategies for the joint marketing of the region and for the incorporation of native peoples into their development could well be starting points for discussion.

Because of the global significance of the region he emphasized the need for land use protection, particularly in those areas subject to rapid demographic growth. He saw the need for land use planning as an instrument that should be seen in achieving the goal of making environmentalism in the region congruent with local needs and requirements. From the process would emerge the inevitable bargains, trade-offs and decisions that are part of a democracy. The process, however, would put stakeholders in a central position for defining the future of the region.

Video tapes of the following sessions are available:

- (1) Neal Peirce's keynote address,
- (2) the response of the Panel, and
- (3) Case Study Forum .

Audio tapes of either the entire Conference or any individual session are also available.

These may be obtained from: Government Studies
Ring House 2
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E2
Telephone (403) 492-5052
FAX (403) 492-8265