

"Creativity lies at the heart of modern competitiveness. Innovation is the ability to create new products and services, to produce existing products in new ways, and to develop new markets. It drives productivity; it drives growth; and it drives our living standards. The problem is that Canada is not an innovation leader".

The above quote is from Kevin Lynch's article in The Globe and Mail entitled, **Canada has everything going for it- except innovation.**

Canada's attitude toward itself has been called many things, a colonial mentality, a weak sister mentality, and a branch plant mentality, but no matter what term you use to describe Canada, they all refer to the fact that Canada is content just to sit back and do things they way that things have always been done, with attention to innovation or change being minimal to the point of being non-existent. I am referring, of course to the attitude in which the governments, both past and present have not introduced any real creativity in terms of how we can be in the forefront of innovation, and therefore competitiveness.

It is time Canada and our provinces had their own state oil company! Canada's Nexen Inc., available at \$15.1 Billion would have been a good initial investment for such a new Canadian Provincial, (Can-Pro) company to join the world's other state owned oil and gas companies which have a combined \$3 Trillion in assets. Unfortunately, the Chinese got there first and now they are the proud owner of oil and gas assets which at today's prices would be worth \$300 Billion alone over the next thirty years. The Chinese government only paid \$15.1 Billion for this piece of Canada!

The B.C. publication The Tye states, "Norway produces 40 percent less petroleum than Canada and has one-seventh of our population, but has saved more than \$600 Billion in oil and gas revenue and counting. This is equivalent to about 40 percent of Norwegian GDP or about \$120,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. In contrast, every Canadian is in the red about \$16,000, due to our \$566 Billion national debt. "While Canada is eliminating 19,000 public sector jobs in an effort to balance the budget, Norway is debt free, enjoys full employment, and has the fourth largest per capita GDP in the world, Canada is twelfth".

There are no bad companies, only bad management

Why is it that our students are so far in debt that many drop out because of the overwhelming

financial burden? According to the Canadian Federation of Students, the total student debt is a whopping \$15 Billion and counting. If this country thought of our students as a natural resource asset instead of penalizing them, we could make better use of our budget dollars to invest in our own country. If only a fraction of the lop-sided \$35 Billion defense money allotted for the F-35's were transferred to wipe out the present student debt then we could enjoy a more innovative system that would allow students free post-secondary education, treated like grades 13 through 17, making sure that we continue a responsible legacy to the next generation instead of a restrictive, inherited debt load.

Innovation not imitation

Innovative management policy would also make sure that we see beyond what is only immediate, looking forward to a more creative and promising future in trade, ensuring a healthy and vibrant economy. Canada is a member of the 54 nation Royal Commonwealth of Nations, and in that Commonwealth are some 2 Billion people, as opposed to just over 300 Million the U.S. There is a huge potential in Commonwealth trade that could be actively pursued, instead of plodding along with our present dependency on the U.S.

With innovative, visionary thinking, instead of the old reactionary style, Canadians could be world leaders in so many areas. Instead of an archaic system that promotes inequality, especially for our top 1%, which is threatened by the prospect of change, we could be enjoying a clear and vibrant future through innovation, and affordable education for our youth.