

## INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS

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# Notaries Step Forward to Embrace Positive Change

*Excerpts from an address to The Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia at our Annual fall Conference, Whistler, BC, September 2003*

It is proper for me to pay homage to my host, The Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia, and to each of you individually.

Thank you. I am honoured by your invitation.

I begin with a quote I am sure you will all recognize: “A Notary’s word is his or her bond. We have a noble history of being honest and trustworthy. We will continue to honour and respect the public trust we have earned.” As your President Leta Best so well expressed, our word is a time-honoured testament of honesty, certainty, and truth.

Collectively and individually, we are the agents of trust. We are the providers, the keepers of social peace. You and I are members of an old, distinguished, and privileged profession. Our charge is only one: to keep the peace in society by providing trust and security.

From early Greek and Roman times, society has entrusted us—indeed, empowered us—with the public trust. A heavy burden we all proudly carry. And, in so doing, we must always look forward, but we must also be forever mindful of our long-standing values and traditions.

More than 75 years—a lifetime—have elapsed since Jack Loutet, The Society’s first President, envisioned the

events of this day. Many wise and dedicated men and women have since stepped forward to lead the way. Many more will join us.

Today, The Society of Notaries Public of BC is in the capable and dedicated hands of a new generation. A new generation that must always look forward, but be forever mindful of those who have lead the way.

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Keeping Pace with Change, a title I have borrowed from your Past-President Ken Sherk, brings forth thoughts of the changes our profession has endured during the last years. As the world grows smaller, as the economies of the world change and become more agile and more demanding, we must continue to change.

We must accept change. More than that, we must bring change forth. We must keep pace with this agile economy. We must adopt new technologies. We must adapt.

History has proven that the intervention of a Notary is a valuable and indispensable service that provides trust, security, and social peace and that avoids the stress and expense of litigation.

Yet, we must change. We must react. We must reach out to new technologies. We must become agile. We must respond to this new call for modernization.

In our search for change, we must improve yet not discard the honesty, certainty, trust, security, public faith, and peace that we alone can bring to society.

So we face today three basic questions.

- Are we ready?
- Are we able?
- Are we willing?

To face the reality of this new society driven by the economies of the world. Ever more demanding. Ever less forgiving.

- Yes, are we ready.
- Yes, we are able.
- Yes, we are willing.

In our search for change, for improvement, we need not travel the world. May I suggest we will find these positive changes among us.

There will be obstacles, but we must be the instruments of our own change. We must not wait for the economies of the world to force change upon us.

There are events in human history than man must not forget. There are events that man must not allow to recur.

I would like to borrow a verse I know is very dear to you: *God keep our land glorious and free.* ▲

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