Dialogue Probes What Makes Us Unique

September 20, 2002 – What kind of future do we want for ourselves and our children? What are we prepared to do to realize that future? What do we expect our governments and others – business, religious and voluntary organizations, for example – to contribute?

These are questions that participants will attempt to answer in an unprecedented series of dialogues beginning this week across Canada. The ***Citizens' Dialogue on the Kind of Canada We Want*** is a project of CPRN's Public Involvement Network in partnership with Viewpoint Learning.

Participants will be representative of the general population. There will be ten dialogues in all – eight in English and two in French. They will reflect both rural and urban perspectives. Each session will involve about 40 participants, yielding a total sample of more than 400.

The first dialogue will take place in Ottawa on September 21st, followed by sessions in Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver, Halifax, Moncton, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Quebec City, and Toronto.

Viewpoint Learning's "ChoiceWork Dialogue" methodology takes consultation to a new depth and complexity. The day-long sessions will help citizens to explore their core values in relation to urgent issues of the day. They will also test their attachment to Canada and its unique institutions and programs.

An analytical report on the collected results will be shared with the sponsors, participants and the public at large in Spring 2003.

"The results will tell us a great deal about who we are as Canadians and where we want to be in the future," says Mary Pat MacKinnon, Director of CPRN's Public Involvement Network. "They will also provide a valuable reality check for the assumptions of our policy makers."

The Citizens' Dialogue is sponsored by a number of federal departments and agencies.

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