



Ottawa, August 31, 2021

Buying Canadian builds muscle for regions and combats GHGs

(Open letter to candidates of any party in the federal election written by the President and CEO of the "Well Made Here" organization (www.ici-here.ca) on behalf of 160 manufacturing locations that participate and the network of more than 2,300 hardware stores and renovation centers that support it.)

While the time has come for a green recovery, for so-called more sustainable development, we invite everyone who has decided to be in the running to become a member of Parliament at the federal level to ask themselves the following question: why are we so timid when the time comes to concretely support the purchase of products that are genuinely made in this country?

The "Buy American Act" and its equivalents in all Western countries do not really have a Canadian counterpart. Indeed, for the sake of candidness to the world, or perhaps due to the Canadian tendency to apologize for just about everything, even just existing, our government does not positively discriminate in favour of domestic manufacturers. Yet there are so many options to promote local buying in public sourcing without offending the NAFTAs of this world.

As for supporting local manufacturing among consumers, we are confined to cosmetics. Quebec's Le Panier Bleu is copy-pasted from one provincial slogan to another, defended with populist blabla where importers of products that are often of questionable quality, who give little or no consideration to local suppliers, are supported in the same way as retailers who are part of a more vertical, inclusive, or even circular development.

Let it be clear that we are in favour of street shop traffic, no matter what is sold, and that such retail presence acts as a healthy counterweight to virtual transactions on the giants' platforms. But let's not be fooled and even less complicit in a farce: buying a pasta machine that was made in China from a charming boutique in Milan does not amount to a local Italian purchase.



We want the candidates of any party to take better account, in their programs and possibly in their actions as elected officials, of the true contribution of manufacturing activity to the socio-economic fibre of a municipality, a region, a country. In addition to the fact that manufacturing jobs are numerous, stable, and generally well paid, it should be noted that these companies generate three times more economic and fiscal benefits than those which simply import merchandise.

In the specific case of the "Well Made Here" program, there is also an impact of a climatic nature since the use of materials that consume less energy at the manufacturing and distribution stages, incorporated into shorter supply chains, favours the reduction of GHGs.

We could also invoke the logistics variable as an additional motive to encourage the relocation of manufacturing activities in the country and the creation of coherent clusters by region, given the delays and especially the uncertainty that have been exacerbated due to the current pandemic. The resulting gaps and breakdowns in supply chains have had eccentric repercussions in the form of lost contracts or lost labour, at the very least losses in anticipated profit margins.

Speaking and acting in favour of policies that stimulate manufacturing activity in the construction materials sector and promote their consumption by governments as well as by citizens and building contractors appears to us to be a duty for all elected officials and those who aspire to this status.

The post-pandemic, the election campaign, the need for economic recovery and the pressure to be green seem to us to be the ideal opportunity to create among hardware store consumers and building contractors the reflex to buy Canadian

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