

Notes for Talk on

“Getting Back in the Game”

To the Toronto Branch of the Canadian

International Council

By Paul Heinbecker

Former Ambassador and Permanent

Representative of Canada to the

United Nations

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

Introduction

Tonight I want to talk to you about three things

1. **My Optimism** about Canada—
 - We are not a superpower but we are a super country
2. **My Dissatisfaction** with our current foreign policy,
 - and with our diminished standing in the world
3. **My Conviction** that we can do better
 - and my ideas how we can do so

I. MY OPTIMISM

I am **optimistic** about Canada's prospects in the emerging world for three reasons

1. Because Canada **has succeeded** in the past
2. Because we have an **abundance of tangible and intangible assets**
3. And because the diplomatic **stars are forming favourably** for Canada

I. Our Success-filled history

- Pearson
 - Canadian fingerprints
 - on the UN Charter,
 - the UN Declaration of Human Rights,

- the North Atlantic Treaty,
 - the GATT,
 - ICAO,
 - Peacekeeping and the Nobel Prize
 - Vietnam war
-
- Trudeau
 - North-South and Development
 - G-7
- Mulroney
 - FTA/NAFTA
 - Acid rain
 - Arctic passage
 - Climate Change Summit 2008
 - Ethiopia
 - Apartheid
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Unification of Germany
- Chrétien
 - Iraq War
 - Human Security agenda
 - Criminal Court
 - Responsibility to Protect
 - Child Soldiers
 - Landmines treaty
 - Rwanda
- Martin
 - G20

And “what’s past is prologue”, to quote former GG Vincent Massey

II. Canada's Tangible Assets

Richer, healthier, better educated, more worldly, more integrated/better connected than ever in history

Canada is a Top 20 power in almost every respect

- 8th on UNDP Human Development Index

Our Size/Population

- **Not** a small power,
 - Compare ourselves to the US
 - Globally, as Einstein might have said, it's all relative.
 - With a population of nearly 35 million (34, 590,000, we are larger than 160 other countries

- **Not** a Middle Power
 - 192 countries
 - Cyprus or Cote d'Ivoire are median countries in GDP terms

Our Economy

- 11th in world;

by 2050, 16th --but still 5th in gdp/capita in 2050

Even if the newly emerging economies fulfill expectations, and grow as strongly as anticipated, Canada will still rank no worse than 16th out of 192 countries.*

* Goldman-Sachs projection, March 2007

- 6th in trade
- 12th in competitiveness, according to the WEF

- **Banking and financial System**
 - Canada has the soundest banking system of the 133 countries surveyed in the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum, which runs the Davos meetings of world leaders. (The US ranks 108th.)

- **Our industry**
 - RIM—160 countries
 - Magna
 - Lavalin
 - Bombardier
 - But productivity

- **Our Natural resources.**
 - Large reserves of conventional and non-conventional oil and gas, coal, uranium and hydro make Canada one of the world's largest producers
 - According to the International Energy Agency (IEA),
 - second among OECD countries in the total production of energy
 - estimated reserves of 179 billion barrels of oil, put us second only to Saudi Arabia.
 - We are the largest supplier of petroleum products, gas, electricity and uranium to the US

Our People

- **Tertiary education** OECD Canada ranked **second** after Russia (Japan was third and the US fourth)
- **Our Universities** (Fifth place in the world after the US, the UK, Germany and the Netherlands according to the British Times Higher Education-QS World University Rankings, 2010,
- **Our High Schools**—OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009

Canadian 15 year-olds ranked

- **sixth in reading proficiency**
- **eighth in science proficiency,**
- and **tenth in math proficiency.**
 - Out of the 65 countries leading countries in the world
 - the top scores in G8 countries

Our Authors

- Atwood, Lawrence, Bissoondath, Urquhart, Martel, Malcolm Gladwell

Our Musicians

- Grammys
 - Arcade Fire

- Neil Young
- Michael Bublé
- Think also of Jon Vickers, Louis Lortie, and Ben Hepner, Measha Brueggergosman, Diana Krall, k.d. lang, Céline Dion, Nelly Furtado, Avril Lavigne and Shania Twain.

Our Human Development

- UNDP Index, **eighth (2010)**

Our Military

- Hard Power
 - Militarily, we rank 13th in the world in spending
 - Ahead of 179 other countries
 - General Andrew Leslie --the best small army in the world
 - Afghanistan, Libya

III. Canada's Intangible Assets

English and French

- English is to international communication what the US dollar is to international trade and finance.

Diversity

- Over 100 of the world's languages are spoken in Canada,
- those of the major economies, such as Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Arabic, Russian, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Turkish (Statistics Canada).
- Toronto, over 50 percent of the population over 15 years of age was born in another country, making.

Our Democratic Maturity and Governmental Institutions

- we have been in existence as a nation state longer than 160 other members of the UN and rank among the handful of oldest continuous democracies.
- Peace, Order and Good government
 - The instruments of the Canadian state work effectively;

Human Rights

- Cf with Scandinavia, Germany
- Except for aboriginals

Soft Power

- Joe Nye--Soft Power, the respect that societies generate for themselves by virtue of their success and their values.
Power
- Ralf Dahrendorf, German-British sociologist, philosopher and political scientist, that it is relevant in international relations that millions of people around the world would move to the US if they could
- Gallup 2007-9—Canada more attractive than the US—and everywhere else—to better-educated people in every age group above 18-25

Our Choice of Neighbours

- No military threat since the 1840's
- World's still biggest market
- a perspective on the US that few others—Mexico excepted--, even Americans themselves, do not have-- David Steinberg
- [but the importance of independence
 - The three best arguments for an independent foreign policy
 - Condoleeza Rice:*We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.*
 - Dick Cheney:*We believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons.*

- Colin Powell: *These are not assertions. What we're giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence]*

IV. Our Multi-Centric World; the Stars Are Forming favourably

A world we can compete in

Great range for our diplomacy

Military power less a factor of influence these days than economic power is

Emerging countries are not overthrowing the existing system

- China, Japan and India rank 2nd, 3rd and 4th in economic production PPP—
- China streets ahead of BRICS
 - Standards of living-- 100 fold-10,000 percent
 - China is US's largest creditor—power, but joined at the wallet
 - High literacy
 - But environment
 - 1 % of Chinas 560 million urban residents breathe air that meets western standards
 - On the UNDP Human Development Index—92nd
- India
 - Enormous progress -4th in GDP on a PPP basis

- but enormous difficulties
- 147th in literacy
- On the UNDP Human Development Index—119th

- Brazil
 - Economic standing—8th
 - 2014 World Cup
 - 2016 Summer Olympics
 - On the UNDP Human Development Index—75th

- Russia
 - One generation away from democracy
 - Nukes
 - Resources
 - GDP per capita in 2009 \$15,200
 - On UNDP Human Development Index—65th

- Japan
 - World's 3rd largest economy
 - But debt and triple whammy of earthquake, typhoon and nuclear accident
 - On UNDP Human Development Index—11th

- Europe
 - Largest economy at \$17 Trillion
 - World's largest aid donor
 - But not fully an entity yet

- USA

- Pre-eminent but no longer predominant
- World's greatest debtor—but reserve currency
- Militarily the equal of all the rest
- Nobel Prizes –320,
 - more in 2009—9—than China ever has won cumulatively
- Ranks first in Times ranking of top universities—15/20 and 72/100
- (UK 29, Germany 14, Netherlands 10, Canada 9)
- Most competitive major country according to WEF

II. MY DISSATISFACTION WITH HARPER FOREIGN POLICY

- SFT 2007
 - “Canada is back as a credible player on the international scene”
 - “Focus and action rather than rhetoric and posturing are restoring Canada’s influence in global affairs”
 - Our government will continue Canada’s international leadership through concrete actions that bring results
- About four years of focus and action later and we had lost the UN Security Council election 2010
- What happened?

1) The Harper Government’s Achievements

- Strengthening the armed forces --but diplomacy cuts

- G 20 –substance --financial crisis— but \$1 billion???
- Haiti
- Afghanistan, extension
- Libya
- Arctic, but more talk than accomplishment-- and Cold War rhetoric
- Women's and children's health—Mrs. Clinton and the Lancet
- African Aid Commitment kept, mostly
- FTA in Colombia, negotiations to begin with India
- Cda-EU Trade, possibly
- the Security Perimeter?

2) The Harper Government's Failures

- **Style**
 - Inexperience
 - Distrust of DFAIT
 - Lack of Ambition—minority?
 - Excessive partisanship
 - Stood Trudeau on his head
 - Diaspora politics
 - Light-switch" diplomacy—Africa and Latin America
 - Excessive communications control
 - Afghan detainees

- **Substance**
 - Mismanaged important relationships
 - Mexico
 - UAE
 - China--Olympics
 - Russia/Arctic
 - Turkey

 - Mismanaged climate change

 - Mismanaged Asia
 - No Asia strategy
 - Canada the next Argentina?

 - Mismanaged aspects of trade

- TPF and the Pacific (Supply management in the Speech from the Throne

- Mismanaged Africa

- Mismanaged Climate Change,

- Mismanaged our UN Security Council campaign

- In the last decade, while the Council has sometimes been divided, it has nevertheless
 - outlawed cooperation with al Qaeda,

 - authorized military action in Afghanistan,

 - declined to authorize the Bush administration's attack on Iraq,

 - ended the bloody conflict between Israel and Hezbollah,

 - toughened sanctions on nuclear violators North Korea and Iran,

 - imposed a no-fly zone in Libya and authorized member states to protect Libyans from their psychopathic leader

 - and received the Palestinians' application for membership.

- More recently, Ottawa mismanaged the Israelis and Palestinians
 - Uncritical support of a hard-line, Likud government in Israel that is dependent on extremist and fundamentalist parties Israel
 - German Chancellor Angela Merkel – Netanyahu not having “made a single step to advance peace” (Haaretz, 21.03.10).
 - Former Bush and Obama Defense Secretary Robert Gates -- Netanyahu ungrateful and endangering Israel by refusing to grapple with its growing isolation (Haaretz,06/09/11).
 - Former US President Bill Clinton has said that the Netanyahu government has received all of the assurances

previous Israeli governments said they wanted but now won't accept those terms to make peace (Foreign Policy Magazine, September 22, 2011).

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert –unwise

Israeli opposition leader Tzipi Livni—
Netanyahu wasted two years before conducting negotiations with the Palestinians.

- Disregarded Palestinians' rights and aspirations, and suffering
- Criticized Palestinian approach for membership in the multilateral UN as “Unilateral”
 - after 44 years of occupation, 30 years since the Israel-Egypt agreement, 20 years of negotiations since Oslo –
- but turned a blind eye to Israel's
 - unilateral transfer of population— 500,000 thus far—into the West Bank
 - unilateral annexation of Jerusalem
 - unilateral building of settlements
 - unilateral confiscation of Palestinian homes
 - unilateral placement of the security barrier on Palestinian land

3) Bright Signs

- “since coming to office—in fact since becoming prime minister—the thing that’s probably struck me the most in terms of my previous expectations—I don’t even know what my expectations were—is not just how important foreign affairs/foreign relations is, but in fact that it’s become almost everything.”
- “There’s hardly anything today of any significance that doesn’t have a huge international dimension to it, beginning first and foremost with the economy. Yeah, we have a strong economy, but really we have a stronger Canadian economy within a world economy.”
(Whyte interview in Macleans)
- 2011 Party Conference speech
 - A country founded on great principles.
 - A courageous warrior, a compassionate neighbour, a confident partner ...
- And not all the responsibility for Canada’s slipping reputation can fairly be laid at the Harper government’s door.
- The interest of Canadian governments in the world has flagged with the budget cuts and national unity crises of the 1990s.
- But it is the Harper government that claimed that, under its leadership, that Canada would be a respected player on the international stage.

- There is little that has been strategic or principled in current policy and much that has been unambitious, and disappointing.
- And Baird's speech at the UN this week, which will have been regarded by many as unprincipled and hypocritical self-congratulations, pitched to domestic constituencies, will set matters back

III. CONVICTION—CANADA CAN DO BETTER

- **Our problems are essentially man-made**
- **They can be man- unmade**
 - **How?**
 - View FP as important—
 - Personal diplomacy by the Prime Minister
 - DFAIT as relationship manager
 - Cabinet coherence--Senior for min—one foreign policy, not multiple ones
 - Budget coherence-- re-invest in diplomacy
 - Work with the millions of Canadians active in international affairs

IV. CONCLUSION

- The stars are forming favourably for Canada
- Fortunate in our neighbour
- Emerging countries are not overthrowing the existing system
- Canada has the assets to play this game

All that Canada needs is ambition, vision and leadership

We are not a super power.

But we can be a super country