



THE JOHN MCKAY REPORT

Member of Parliament Scarborough-Guildwood

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A GLOBAL NETWORKS STRATEGY : THE ARCTIC REGION

Canada is an Arctic nation, and should be playing a leadership role, with all Arctic people and all Arctic countries, to safeguard the well-being of Arctic residents, stewardship of the sensitive Northern environment, its cultures, its economic development and security.

A new approach to Canada's North and the international Arctic region is essential, one which will move beyond flag planting and hollow rhetoric. A Liberal government will focus on the social needs of the peoples of Canada's north, as well as their knowledge, ideas, and energy.

ESSENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Canada will lead international cooperation on climate change, environmental stewardship, resource development, future shipping through the Northwest Passage, security and culture. The best way to strengthen Arctic sovereignty involves partnership with those Canadians who call the Arctic home. They know the region best, and are the most able to shape a new set of priorities. The Canadian government must be a strong partner with Northerners, and a strong ally with other Arctic Nations, fostering shared interests, building and strengthening multilateral institutions.



CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY WILL BE PROTECTED

Canadian sovereignty will not be undermined, but our interests will be more effectively advanced, when sovereignty is exercised more strategically. The Arctic is an excellent example of our interest being best pursued in a network, rather than through an attempt to dictate terms from the top of a hierarchy. We must build partnerships with Russia and the United States, both of whom have interests in Arctic issues, as well as with other Arctic nations and indigenous peoples.

RENEWED PARTICIPATION IN THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

The Harper government has downgraded our participation in the Arctic Council and eliminated the position of Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs. A Liberal Government would appoint a new Ambassador, energizing Canada's participation in the Arctic Council. We would also propose a new international agreement on the Arctic. This would bring together all members of the Arctic Council to formalize cooperation on the environment, resource development, transportation, search and rescue, and security. It could also mandate a joint mapping exercise of Arctic lands and waters to help establish international protected lands, oceans, fisheries and wildlife, sacred indigenous sites, and further cooperation on security. We would also establish a permanent secretariat for the Arctic Council in Canada and support negotiations for the new international agreement, and capacity building for full participation in this exercise.

This is the fifth in a series of twelve articles on the Global Networks Strategy which is part of the Liberal platform. Other articles in the series are available on request from my Constituency Office.

- 1 - Why change is needed
- 2 - What and how to change
- 3 - Agreements with China and India
- 4 - Partnerships in North America
- 5 - The Arctic region
- 6 - Partnership with Africa
- 7 - Human development
- 8 - Canadian Multilateralism
- 9 - Branding Canada for success
- 10 - Energy, environment and economy
- 11 - Federal government capacity
- 12 - Liberal commitments



A GLOBAL NETWORKS STRATEGY: OPENNESS TO THE WORLD

Canadians embrace the world with confidence, optimism and a blend of new-world idealism and old-fashioned practicality. Doing well in the world, and *with* the world is part of who we are. We want to contribute to progress, leave things better for our children, and right wrongs where we can. A modest population spread across a vast geography, Canadians understand those ambitions require working with others, beyond our borders. Blessed with the prosperity of a developed, Western economy, but unburdened by any history of conquest, we are welcomed by many, often envied, but seldom resented.

This is what we tell ourselves. We see ourselves this way because of our past. But in a rapidly changing world, it is now essential that Canadians re-examine our role, our manner of contributing, our way of pursuing our interests and applying our values.

WE NEED TO ADAPT TO CHANGE

The world has changed in ways to which we have not yet adapted, and at a pace that we have yet to confront. It is not that our history in international affairs, of which we are justifiably proud, is irrelevant. But it is the past, and its lessons must now be applied to the future with fresh thinking to move beyond old debates and answer the next decade's questions.

CANADA AND PEACEKEEPING

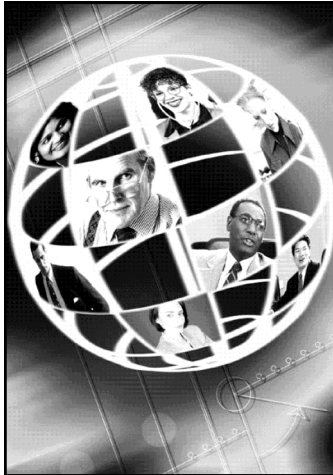
Lester B. Pearson invented United Nations peacekeeping. But we have gone from its leading practitioner to the world's 56th ranked contributor to peace operations today. During that shift, the practice has become vastly more complex – and dangerous - than in its earlier decades. Is Canada a peacemaker and conflict preventer of the future? If so, how should we go about it in the years ahead?

CANADA AND CHINA

Pierre Trudeau led the world's opening to China, with Canada crafting a careful diplomatic recognition in 1970 that was emulated by other countries in subsequent years. Since that time, China has gone from an isolated, backward economy to a global powerhouse, forecast to become the world's largest economy in the next two decades. Will Canada again be a leader in innovative engagement with China, or continue sliding off the radar screen of Asia's emerging giants?

CANADA AND APARTHEID

Brian Mulroney put Canadian values into practice when he played a leading role in the



Commonwealth to end Apartheid in South Africa. Those efforts contributed to the high regard many Africans have for Canada, and yet the current government has removed a number of African nations from among its priorities, reduced commitments to African development assistance, and shifted its limited attention elsewhere.

CANADA AND THE WORLD'S POOREST

Does Canada still care enough to stand with the world's poorest in the years ahead, and partner with a changing Africa? If so, should the debate be

about the right amount of money to devote to aid, or is it about finding innovative new ways to build capacity and eradicate poverty?

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

These are the kind of questions to be answered as Canada looks to the future, and rethinks its objectives, interests, values, challenges and advantages in an ever more complex world. Canada was once a credible player in the world's debates, a source of knowledge and fresh thinking. Canadians want to play such roles again, and we can.

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