I’M GOING TO SPEAK TONIGHT ABOUT THE IMPACT WHICH CANADA COULD HAVE IN OUR COMPLEX AND CHANGING WORLD.

BUT FIRST, I WANT TO BE CLEAR ABOUT THE DOMESTIC BASE OF FOREIGN POLICY – THE SPECIFIC AND TANGIBLE CANADIAN INTERESTS WHICH MUST BE ADVANCED AND PROTECTED INTERNATIONALLY. MOST FOREIGN MINISTERS SPEND MOST OF OUR TIME ON TRADE IRRITANTS, AND CONSULAR CASES, AND SOFTWOOD LUMBER, AND THE FISHERY, AND SOFTWOOD LUMBER. THOSE ARE THE STAPLE ISSUES NOT TAUGHT AT SCHOOLS OF INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY.

BUT THE ISSUES WHICH DEFINE A COUNTRY – WHICH ADD TO ITS WEIGHT IN THE WORLD, AND TO ITS SENSE OF WORTH AND PURPOSE AT HOME -- REACH BEYOND NARROW DEFINITIONS OF INTEREST. THE SERIOUS PURSUIT OF THOSE LARGER ISSUES REINFORCES SIGNIFICANTLY OUR CAPACITY TO MAKE PROGRESS ON OUR DOMESTIC AGENDA. THE MORE RESPECTED WE ARE IN THE WORLD, THE MORE EFFECTIVE WE CAN BE IN ADVANCING OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS.

BEFORE ALLAN MACEACHAN AND I BECAME STATESMEN, WE WERE PARTISANS -- SOMETIMES ATTACKING POLICIES WE REALLY BELIEVED MADE SOME SENSE –
A Brave Young Government

Before Allan MacEachen and I became statesmen, we were partisans – sometimes attacking policies we really believed made sense, sometimes bringing down young governments which should have been given a chance...

-- SOMETIMES BRINGING DOWN YOUNG GOVERNMENTS WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN A CHANCE.

WE WERE EACH DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE TWO NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH ALTERNATED IN OFFICE AND, IN OUR DIFFERENT WAYS, SHARED A MANDATE TO RECONCILE THE WHOLE AND DIVERSE CANADIAN COMMUNITY.

NOW I WILL LET ALLAN DESCRIBE WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE LIBERAL PARTY – AT A TIME OF HIS CHOOSING.

I’LL MAKE ONLY ONE OBSERVATION ABOUT WHAT WAS ONCE MY SIDE OF THE AISLE – THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY TODAY IS THAT THEY ARE A PRIVATE INTEREST PARTY IN A PUBLIC INTEREST COUNTRY. THAT MAY CHANGE – AND THAT PERTAINS DIRECTLY TO CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY BECAUSE SO MUCH OF OUR INTERNATIONAL ROLE INVOLVES RECONCILING DIFFERENT INTERESTS TOWARDS COMMON PURPOSES.

FOREIGN POLICY IS RARELY AN ELECTION ISSUE IN CANADA – IN PART BECAUSE WE ARE A MIDDLE POWER, ABLE TO INFLUENCE EVENTS BUT NOT DRIVE THEM, AND IN PART BECAUSE FOREIGN POLICY HAS NOT YET BECOME A POPULIST ISSUE HERE, EXCEPT OCCASIONALLY, ONCE CONSCRIPTION, PERHAPS NOW AFGHANISTAN.

MOST OF THE INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES WHICH CAME TO DEFINE CANADA WERE SET BY MINISTERS, AND THEN ACCEPTED BY PARLIAMENTS AND, USUALLY, PUBLICS – THAT WAS THE CASE WITH THE COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, FIRST THROUGH THE EXTERNAL AID OFFICE ESTABLISHED BY THE DIFENBAKER GOVERNMENT WELL BEFORE C.I.D.A., TO PEACE-KEEPING, THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID, THE LAND MINES TREATY. THERE IS RESISTANCE, THESE DAYS, TO TOP-DOWN PROCESSES BUT, IN FACT, THEY HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR ALMOST EVERY SIGNIFICANT CANADIAN INITIATIVE – DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL – FROM THE C.B.C. TO MEDICARE TO FREE TRADE.
THE COROLARY IS THAT SUCH LEADERSHIP SUCCEEDS ONLY WHEN IT BUILD A CONSTITUENCY FOR CHANGE. THAT SUPPORT NEED NOT BE ENTHUSIASTIC. ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS, IT OFTEN WON’T BE, BECAUSE, LOCAL ISSUES ARE ALMOST ALWAYS MORE PRESSING.

I MAKE THAT SIMPLE POINT FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST – BUILDING A CONSTITUENCY IN CANADA FOR INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES IS NOW MORE NECESSARY THAN IT WAS BEFORE. SECOND, CANADIANS INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ARE NOT ACCUSTOMED TO BUILDING A BROAD CONSTITUENCY.


THERE IS A DIFFERENT DYNAMIC NOW – WITH WELL-FUNDED INTEREST GROUPS, MINORITY PARLIAMENTS, A MEDIA FOCUSED ON THE SENSATIONAL AND THE SHORT-TERM, A PRE-OCCLUSION WITH BUSINESS AND SECURITY AGENDAS AND THE DISPLACEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATICS FROM THEIR TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.
No Longer Far Away

We are no longer far away – no longer the remote North, coloured pink on old maps...

THE LATE BRITISH ECONOMIST BARBARA WARD ONCE CALLED CANADA “THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY”. THAT IS STILL OUR REPUTATION BUT WE HAVE BECOME MUCH MORE INWARD-LOOKING. THAT IS IRONIC, BECAUSE IN FACT CANADIANS ARE NOW MORE EXPOSED TO THE WORLD THAN WE HAVE EVER BEEN BEFORE.

WE ARE NO LONGER FAR AWAY – NO LONGER THE REMOTE NORTH, COLOURED PINK ON OLD MAPS, OR SAFELY BOUNDED BY A SUPERPOWER ON ONE BORDER, AND THREE OCEANS – ONE DEEMED IMPENETRABLE – ON THREE OTHERS.

INSTEAD, SARS STRIKES HERE, REFUGEES COME HERE, POLLUTANTS POLLUTE HERE, AND CLOSE RELATIVES OF CANADIANS DIE IN VIRTUALLY EVERY CONFLICT IN THE WORLD. FOR YEARS, THE FRONT LINE OF THE WORLD’S THREATS WAS ALWAYS FAR FROM US – IT WAS, TO USE A PHRASE, FROM “AWAY”.
The Front Line

For years, the front line of the world’s threats was always far from us – it was, to use a phrase, from “away.” Today, a front line of global warming is in our North, on our Arctic border, on our turf...

TODAY, A FRONT LINE OF GLOBAL WARMING IS IN OUR NORTH, ON OUR ARCTIC BORDER, ON OUR TURF.

CANADA’S “INTERESTS” ARE NOT NARROWLY A BORDER, OR MERELY THINGS WITHIN OUR SOVEREIGN CONTROL. WE HAVE A PROFOUND INTEREST IN A WORLD THAT WORKS. I HOPE TO PERSUADE YOU TONIGHT THAT WE ALSO HAVE ASSETS – DISTINCT AND VALUABLE CANADIAN ASSETS – IN THE WORLD WHICH IS TAKING SHAPE, AND WE NEED TO PUT THOSE CANADIAN ASSETS TO WORK.

THREE CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFER UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADA.

THOSE CHANGES ARE:

• FIRST, POWER AMONG NATIONS IS SHIFTING INEXORABLY, IN WHAT FAREED ZAKHARIA CALLS THE “POST-AMERICAN WORLD”;

• SECOND, THE MOST SERIOUS CONFLICTS NOW FLOW NOT FROM IDEOLOGY, AND NOT SIMPLY FROM POVERTY, BUT FROM CULTURE AND IDENTITY AND FAITH;

• THIRD, NON-STATE ACTORS – LIKE THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT, N.G.O.S, ORGANIZED CRIME, TECHNOLOGY, FORCES WHICH ARE NOT GOVERNMENTS – ARE PLAYING AN INCREASING ROLE, AND THAT ROLE WILL GROW.
IT IS WORTH NOTING SOME SPENDING PATTERNS IN CANADA.

THERE ARE THREE DEPARTMENTS IN THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA WITH EXPLICIT INTERNATIONAL VOCATIONS – RANKED ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT’S PUBLISHED SPENDING REPORTS FOR 2008-09.

THEY ARE:
- NATIONAL DEFENCE, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR 8.29% OF FEDERAL PROGRAM SPENDING;
- CIDA, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR 1.39%, LARGELY BECAUSE OF G-8 COMMITMENTS MADE BY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS;
- AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE, WHICH CURRENTLY ACCOUNTS FOR 1.0% OF FEDERAL PROGRAM SPENDING.
HERE ARE THE SPENDING TRENDS. COMPARED WITH 2007-2008, THE D.N.D. BUDGET INCREASED BY CLOSE TO 8.4%; CIDA’S INCREASED BY 0.68%; DFAIT DROPPED BY 17.96%. DFAIT ESTIMATES THAT THIS DECLINE WILL CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT TWO YEARS AND THAT, BY 2010-2011, ITS BUDGET WILL DECREASE BY ANOTHER 13.38%.

OTHER COUNTRIES HAD ALSO CUT SPENDING ON DEVELOPMENT AND DIPLOMACY. BUT THAT’S YESTERDAY’S NEWS. MANY OF THOSE COUNTRIES HAVE NOW BEGUN DELIBERATELY TO INVEST AGAIN IN DEVELOPMENT AND DIPLOMACY -- BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE IT TO BE IN THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST, IN THIS CHANGING WORLD. THAT WAS HILLARY CLINTON’S FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT, ON HER FIRST DAY IN OFFICE AS U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE.

BUT LOOK ALSO AT THE DIPLOMATIC STRENGTH OF BRAZIL AND CHINA, AND THE HIGH PRIORITY PAID DIPLOMACY BY, AMONG OTHERS, SINGAPORE, NORWAY (CONSISTENTLY UNDERTAKING THE KINDS OF INITIATIVE ONCE ASSOCIATED WITH CANADA), AN INTERESTING “NEW ENTRY” LIKE QUATAR AND, AS USUAL, BRITAIN AND FRANCE.

TO THE HARPER GOVERNMENT’S CREDIT, CANADA HAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED DEFENCE SPENDING – ARGUING THAT, FOR TOO LONG, WE HAD LET OTHER COUNTRIES CARRY AN INCREASING SHARE OF OUR DEFENCE BURDEN. BUT OUR DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES ARE BEING RUN DOWN NOW AS STEADILY AND CERTAINLY AS OUR DEFENCE RESOURCES WERE RUN DOWN BEFORE.

SO, WHY IS CANADA MORE PREPARED TO ACCEPT OUR SHARE OF THE MILITARY BURDEN THAN WE ARE OF THE DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT BURDENS?
The End of the Cold War Changed The Dynamics of Foreign Policy

MORE PARTICULARLY, WHY WOULD CANADA DO THAT NOW, WHEN OUR DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT CREDENTIALS ARE MORE VALUABLE THAN EVER BEFORE?

THINK BACK TO THE LAST GREAT CHANGE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – THE END OF THE COLD WAR.

THAT OVERTURNED THE FUNDAMENTAL DYNAMICS OF FOREIGN POLICY IN WESTERN COUNTRIES. DESPITE HIGH HOPES, THE NEW PRIORITY DID NOT BECOME A PEACE DIVIDEND, OR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. INSTEAD, IT BECAME TRADE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH. GOVERNMENTS CHOSE TO BELIEVE THAT TRADE WOULD COMBAT POVERTY, THAT MARKET MODELS WOULD RELEASE ENERGIES WHICH WERE INHERENTLY DEMOCRATIC, AND THAT MILITARY FORCE WOULD CONTAIN LOCAL CHALLENGES AND DISORDERS.


THE SHIFT IN POWER AMONG NATIONS IS NOT JUST ECONOMIC. IT IS CULTURAL, POLITICAL, MILITARY. IN HIS BOOK, “THE POST-AMERICAN WORLD”, FAREED ZAKHARIA MAKES THE ESSENTIAL POINT THAT THIS CHANGE IS NOT ABOUT ANY NATION’S DECLINE – RATHER IT REFLECT THE RISE AND ASSERTION OF NEW FORCES, SOME OF WHICH ARE NATIONS, SOME OF WHICH ARE NOT.

PERHAPS THE MOST NOTABLE CHANGE IN THIS MODERN WORLD IS IN WHERE CONFLICT COMES FROM. THE MOST SERIOUS CONFLICTS NOW ARE ROOTED IN CULTURE AND IDENTITY AND FAITH. JUST AS CLEARLY THOSE CONFLICTS CANNOT BE RESOLVED BY MERE MILITARY POWER OR “THE MAGIC OF THE MARKET”.

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THEY REQUIRE A MUCH GREATER RELIANCE ON POLITICAL TALENTS -- THE ABILITY TO DRAW DIFFERENCES TOGETHER, TO MANAGE AND RESPECT DIVERSITY, AND TO EARN AND GENERATE TRUST. THOSE QUALITIES, ALWAYS VALUABLE, HAVE NOW BECOME INispensABLE INTERNATIONAL ATTRIBUTES -- AND THEY WILL CONTINUE TO BE, FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

THEY ARE ALSO AMONG THE TRADITIONAL AND GENUINE SIGNATURE QUALITIES OF CANADA, ROOTED IN OUR OWN HISTORY -- AND IN OUR OWN PRESENT, AS A STRIKINGLY SUCCESSFUL MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY -- AND IN OUR CONDUCT AND REPUTATION IN THE WORLD.

MEDIATION, AND RESPECT, AND REASONABLE COMPROMISE ARE AT THE HEART OF THE SUCCESS OF OUR OWN DIVERSE, DYNAMIC COUNTRY. AND THEY ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AND IDENTITY -- THEY ARE A CREDENTIAL WHICH FEW OTHER COUNTRIES CAN CLAIM. WHY DO WE NOT TREAT THAT CREDENTIAL AS A LEADING CANADIAN ASSET?

THINK OF THIS IN ANOTHER WAY. IF OUR INTERNATIONAL POLICY CONTINUES TO CONCENTRATE AS NARROWLY AS IT DOES NOW ON TRADE AND SECURITY, WHERE WILL THAT TAKE CANADA?

GOLDMAN SACHS HAS PUBLISHED A CAREFUL PROJECTION OF THE CHANGES IN WORLD ECONOMIC STANDING, BY 2050.


NOTICE THAT O.E.C.D. COUNTRIES DOMINATE THE TEN LARGEST ECONOMIES NOW.
LOOK AT WHERE ECONOMIC POWER IS PROJECTED TO BE IN 2050 – CHINA, OF COURSE, AND INDIA – BUT LOOK AT SOME OF THE NOW-EMERGING ECONOMIES WHICH WILL THEN BE AHEAD OF CANADA: BRAZIL, INDONESIA, MEXICO, TURKEY, NIGERIA, PHILLIPINES.

SO – IN THIS WORLD OF SHIFTING POWER – HOW LONG WOULD CANADA HAVE A PLACE AT THE TABLE OF A G-8 SUMMIT? WOULD WE MAKE THE CUT OF A G-20? IN OTHER WORDS, WOULD WE KEEP OUR SEAT IN THE INNER CIRCLE OF COUNTRIES WHICH DEFINE INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY?

NOT IF WE FOCUS NARROWLY ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC POLICY, OR DEFINE OUR INTERNATIONAL PROFILE BY MILITARY PRESENCE. BUT THE ODDS ARE THAT WE COULD INCREASE OUR INFLUENCE AS A COUNTRY WERE WE TO RENEW OUR TRUSTED, ACTIVIST DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT CREDENTIALS.

FOR ALL OUR GROWTH AND INNOVATION, CANADA CAN HAVE RELATIVELY MORE INFLUENCE IN POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY THAN WE DO IN TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

ECONOMIC POWER REFLECTS SIZE; DIPLOMACY DEPENDS MORE ON IMAGINATION, AND AGILITY, AND REPUTATION. CANADA’S POLITICAL STRENGTHS HAVE MORE CURRENCY AGAIN, IF WE CHOOSE TO USE THEM.

THERE IS ANOTHER GROWING ADVANTAGE FOR CANADA, IF WE LOOK AT THE EMERGING WORLD WITH FRESH EYES.
THE SHIFT IN POWER IS NOT SIMPLY AMONG NATIONS – IT IS FROM NATIONS TO OTHER FORCES. SOME OF THE MOST DECISIVE SOURCES OF CHANGE IN THE MODERN WORLD ARE NOT NATIONS AT ALL, BUT MOVEMENTS WHICH ARISE AND OPERATE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF NATION-STATES. THAT INCLUDES THE CRITICAL THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL ORDER NOW, WHICH ARE ROOTED IN CULTURE AND IDENTITY AND REPORT TO NO CAPITAL.

BUT IT ALSO INCLUDES SOME OF MOST PROFOUND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MODERN WORLD, WHICH HAVE BEEN STIMULATED BY INITIATIVES FROM OUTSIDE FORMAL GOVERNMENT – THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT, THE GRAMIN BANK, THE INTERNET AND OTHER TRANSFORMATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY, INNUMERABLE N-G-Os, THE GATES AND COMPARABLE FOUNDATIONS, THE NEW COMMITMENT TO CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE CONSTITUTE A POWERFUL NEW SOURCE OF INNOVATION AND EXPERIENCE – IMAGINATIVE, RESPECTED, NOT BOUND BY PROTOCOL OR NATIONAL INTEREST.

YET HERE’S THE RUB: FOR ALL THESE PRIVATE OR NON-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES, THIS IS STILL AN INSTITUTIONAL WORLD. SOVEREIGN STATES STILL MAKE THE CRITICAL DECISIONS – TO CUT OR INCREASE BUDGETS, RESPECT OR BREAK TREATIES, SEND OR WITHDRAW TROOPS, PAY OR WITH-HOLD THEIR MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS, CONFRONT OR IGNORE CRISES.
SO THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY NOW IS TO MARRY MANDATE WITH IMAGINATION -- COMBINE THE CREATIVITY OF THESE INDEPENDENT FORCES WITH THE CAPACITY-TO-ACT OF INSTITUTIONS. THAT IS FAMILIAR TERRITORY TO CANADA BECAUSE PARTNERSHIPS LIKE THAT ARE WHAT HAPPENED IN THE COMMONWEALTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST APARTHEID, THE NEGOTIATION OF THE LAND MINES TREATY AND THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, AND IN A WIDE RANGE OF LESS-PUBLICIZED INITIATIVES.

LET ME REFER SPECIFICALLY TO ALLAN MACEACHEN, AND ONE OF HIS ROLES AS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. IN THE LATE 70s, THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WAS INITIATED IN RESPONSE TO A DEMAND BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO CREATE MORE EQUAL INTERNATIONAL TRADE ARRANGEMENTS. A GROUP OF WESTERN COUNTRIES, LED BY THE NETHERLANDS AND NORWAY, FORMED A “LIKE-MINDED” GROUP TO ADDRESS THAT CONCERN, AND FIND REASONABLE COMPROMISES. BRITAIN JOINED, BUT THEN DREW BACK. CANADA – MACEACHEN AND PIERRE “WHO” – JOINED, AND STAYED, THE ONLY G-7 COUNTRY TO ADD OUR WEIGHT TO THAT INITIATIVE.


THAT ROLE IS NEEDED NOW.
WE ALL KNOW THE WORLD IS CHANGING. WE KNOW THE INSTINCT, WITHIN MOST NATIONS, IS TO SEE THINGS NARROWLY OR DEFENSIVELY. WE ALSO KNOW THAT – DESPITE THE REAL DIVIDES OF WEALTH AND RHETORIC – THERE IS GROWING CONSENSUS ON SOME IMPORTANT ISSUES, INCLUDING THE INCREASING THREAT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION, AN INTEREST IN LIMITING NUCLEAR WEAPONS, THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPARENCY, EVEN THE ROLE OF MARKETS.

BUT IT IS ONE THING TO FIND CONSENSUS, AND ANOTHER TO GIVE IT EFFECT. SO WE ALSO KNOW THE NEED FOR DECISION-MAKERS FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES, TO FIND A PLACE AND AN INCENTIVE TO TRY WHAT MR. GORBACHOV CALLED “NEW THINKING”.

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF SPEAKING LAST WEEK TO THE CENTRE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA – OUR PARTNER ONCE IN THE CAMPAIGN TO END APARTHEID, OUR PARTNER NOW IN THE NEW G-20. I RAISED SOME QUESTIONS, WHICH WE MIGHT CONSIDER HERE.

IS THERE A SPECIAL ROLE FOR COUNTRIES, LIKE CANADA AND SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH COMBINE GREAT CULTURAL DIVERSITY WITH SERIOUS COMMITMENTS TO SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL EQUALITY? IS SOUTH AFRICA ENOUGH ON THE EDGE OF THE “SOUTH”, IS CANADA ENOUGH ON THE EDGE OF THE “NORTH”, TO BE INFLUENTIAL TOGETHER IN BRIDGING THESE DIFFERENCES AND MANAGING THESE CONFLICTS?

THE BBC REGULARLY PUBLISHES AN INTERNATIONAL SURVEY, BY THE POLLING FIRM GLOBESCAN, WHICH LISTS SEVERAL COUNTRIES AND ASKS A BROADLY-BASED SAMPLE OF 28,000 RESPONDENTS, AROUND THE WORLD, IF EACH OF THOSE COUNTRIES HAD A “MOSTLY POSITIVE OR MOSTLY NEGATIVE IMPACT IN THE WORLD.” THEIR MOST RECENT POLL WAS IN JANUARY, 2009.

THE BEST RATINGS IN THE POLL WENT TO GERMANY – 15% NEGATIVE, 61% POSITIVE, WITH CANADA NEXT AT 13% NEGATIVE AND 59% POSITIVE. SOUTH AFRICA HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN INCLUDED IN THE POLL, BUT WAS ADDED THIS TIME, AND THE FIGURES SHOW A NEAR TIE – 32% NEGATIVE, 33% POSITIVE.
Canada Has Always Been an Act of Will

“Confederation was an act of will. So were medicare, equalization, the Charter of Rights, free trade. One reality of our country is that we have to keep proving our worth to our parts.”

FINALLY, AN EFFECTIVE CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY IS NOT ONLY GOOD FOR THE WIDER WORLD, IT IS GOOD FOR US AT HOME.

AS A FORMER MINISTER OF CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS LET ME REMIND YOU THAT CANADA HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN ACT OF WILL.

WE DIDN’T COME TOGETHER NATURALLY. WE HAVEN’T STAYED TOGETHER EASILY. CONFEDERATION WAS AN ACT OF WILL. SO WERE MEDICARE, EQUALIZATION, THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS, FREE TRADE. ONE REALITY OF OUR COUNTRY IS THAT WE HAVE TO KEEP PROVING OUR WORTH TO OUR PARTS.

WE ARE A WEALTHY, LUCKY COUNTRY, INCREASINGLY SELF-ABSORBED. IT IS EASY TO TAKE OUR GOOD FORTUNE FOR GRANTED, OR TO SEE OURSELVES Principally AS ALBERTANS, OR QUEBECERS, OR ENVIRONMENTALISTS, OR SIMPLY TAXPAYERS, AND THUS TO BECOME SMALLER THAN OUR WHOLE.

SO WE NEED TO LOOK TO ISSUES AND ASPIRATIONS THAT REACH ACROSS THE LINES WHICH MIGHT OTHERWISE SET CANADIANS APART, AND TO CHARACTERISTICS WHICH DISTINGUISH US, LEGITIMATELY, FROM COMPARABLE SOCIETIES. INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IS THAT KIND OF ISSUE.
Canada’s Assets in a Changing World

Allan J. MacEachen Lecture in Politics

The Right Honourable Joe Clark

October 22, 2009
St. Francis Xavier University

A SENSE OF “INTERNATIONAL VOCATION” HAS HELPED DEFINE CANADIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY SINCE THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR. IT HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THROUGH OUR SOLDIERS, OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, OUR FOREIGN POLICY, OUR INSTINCTIVE AND GENEROUS RESPONSE TO TSUNAMIS OR FAMINE, AND, MOST OF ALL, THROUGH THE LEGIONS OF CANADIAN MISSIONARIES AND TEACHERS AND ENTREPRENEURS WHO ROUTINELY CHANGE LIVES AROUND THE WORLD.

WE SHOULD TREAT THAT “INTERNATIONAL VOCATION” AS AN ASSET – AS WE TREAT OUR ENERGY RESOURCES, OUR LITERACY AND INGENUITY, OUR DIVERSITY AS AN ASSET. THAT WOULD PROVIDE BOTH A RESONANT INSTRUMENT OF CANADIAN IDENTITY, AND A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO A TURBULENT AND NEEDY WORLD.