

So we restricted access to our minds and markets, instead of encouraging Canadian initiative and excellence. We looked inward, rather than outward. Our cultural and economic competitiveness declined. Our ability to take advantage of the opportunities that beckon a country like Canada diminished. Policies that assumed we were vulnerable were making us vulnerable.

On the fourth of September last year, Canadians signalled that they had had enough. Instead of drawing back from the world, they wanted this country to reach out to the world, to stand strong on our own, in circumstances that, while obviously difficult, are better for Canada than for almost anyone else.

As I said last week in the House of Commons, the cost of establishing a Polar, Class 8, Icebreaker is 500 million dollars. But neither Canadians nor this Government are about to say that Canada cannot afford our Arctic. We can afford our Arctic; we can afford the risks that are involved in actively pursuing our interests; and I believe there is broad public support, indeed a broad public desire, for Canada to begin to take those positions which express the strength and self-confidence of Canadians.

What is at issue here, in this shift from a desire to draw back from the world to a desire to reach out to the world, is not a