

Statement

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91/17

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NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

TO THE COLLOQUIUM ON NORTH PACIFIC

CO-OPERATIVE SECURITY DIALOGUE

IN VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

VICTORIA, British Columbia
April 6, 1991

Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada

External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

Distinguished Guests:

It is an honour for me to attend this colloquium and to speak to you this evening.

I would like to begin by offering a warm welcome to the experts who are joining in these discussions. You come from seven countries of the North Pacific, the United States, Japan, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Soviet Union, the Republic of Korea and Canada, and from some other interested countries, Australia, Malaysia, Mongolia and the United Kingdom. And, on behalf of all of us, I compliment York University's Centre for International and Strategic Studies for organizing this colloquium, and specifically thank Professors David Dewitt and Paul Evans for their effective efforts in bringing together so many distinguished experts.

I trust also that the North Pacific government observers whom I am pleased to see here will find the next days' discussions both informative and helpful to their own considerations of the issues at hand.

The Canadian government has been pleased to contribute funding for this meeting as a sign of the importance we attach to what will take place here. This reflects a long-term commitment by the Government of Canada to the process you are beginning, a commitment that will continue in support of the process of research and discussion in the coming year.

I first broached the idea of a North Pacific Co-operative Security Dialogue last July in speeches here in Victoria, in Tokyo, and in Jakarta. That was against a background of historic global change, change that could not help but have significant effects both on global and regional peace and security and on the conduct of international relations. I believe that this factor -- this historic change -- looms as large today as it did then.

The world keeps changing and there is now less euphoria about the results than there was a year ago. But there have been quantum changes -- fundamentally in the role of the superpowers but also in the attitudes of developing countries who sense themselves more likely to be isolated and among developed countries who must weigh the costs of all concepts of security against the benefits of new means of co-operation. But if the euphoria has changed, the fact has not. Our world is significantly different in 1991 from what it was five years ago. This is most evident in Europe and in the Soviet Union so far, but the effects are global.

Such developments create for all of us a need to adjust our foreign policies and sometimes our domestic policies. They offer us the opportunity of a more secure world at the same time as they portend the risks of a less certain and predictable one.

Since early August, our attention has been riveted to the crisis in the Gulf. Events in that region have demonstrated how the absence of mutual understanding at the regional level can have catastrophic consequences, and how important international dialogue and co-operation can be, especially through the United Nations, in confronting a situation of great danger.

The Gulf crisis is a most telling example of the consequences of not pursuing -- effectively and exhaustively -- all avenues of consultation before resorting to the grave step of military aggression. It has shown, in a dramatic manner, the dangers involved when a state shows a preference for unilateral action over dialogue and compromise.

I would also assert that it illustrates weaknesses in the fabric of regional dialogue in the Middle East. Dialogue was not absent in the run-up to the Gulf War, nor would I discount other factors that led to conflict. But I would say that there was insufficient commitment to using dialogue to address the fundamental problems of the region and the interests of its people.

When I turn to the North Pacific, I cannot help but feel concern at the tenuous threads of communication and the sporadic nature of dialogue among the countries of the area. My concern deepens when I view these weaknesses in the light of the very significant challenges to security and stability we in the North Pacific face.

Canada was extremely active in the Gulf; from the beginning we saw it as a challenge to the rule of international law and the role of the United Nations. For a nation with our territory, our traditions, our interests, it is imperative to respect and strengthen international law and the United Nations. So we became fully involved -- diplomatically, militarily, and now with post-hostilities proposals including arms control -- all this despite the fact that our direct connections with Kuwait and the Gulf are relatively limited.

Our connections with the North Pacific are far more profound and complex. We live here.

Events in the entire Asia Pacific region, whether positive or negative, have an impact on us. In 1990, out of over 212,000 immigrants who came to Canada almost 90,000 were from Asia, the largest regional component of the grand total. Canada is home for 130,000 refugees from Indo-China. Strong cultural and ethnic ties bind an increasing percentage of Canadians to a heritage across the Pacific. And, something that bodes well for our future relations, more than half of all foreign students studying in Canada are from Asia Pacific countries.

Canadian men and women have fought and died in UN action in Korea, and Canada played an important key role in both international control commissions in Indo-China. We are now very much involved in international efforts to resolve the Cambodian conflict.

Finally, there is enormous economic activity between Canada and the rest of Asia Pacific in trade, commerce, investment and development co-operation. As early as 1983, Canadian trade across the Pacific outpaced our trade across the Atlantic. Our trade with the eight Asian members of Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) is now substantially greater than our trade with all 12 members of the European Community. And APEC does not yet include China, our fifth-largest market for exports.

This province of British Columbia now trades almost as much across the Pacific as it does with the U.S., whose border is only some 30 km from this hotel. Canada's economy has benefited from almost \$3 billion of direct investment from Asia. A substantial portion of Canada's overseas development assistance budget goes to Asian countries, including in the North Pacific, where China is one of Canada's aid recipients. Last, but by no means least, is the question of visitors. Each year, almost a million tourists from the Asia Pacific region visit Canada, and an increasing number of Canadians are visiting Asia.

Canada not only has a stake in the security and stability of our region, we are actively involved in seeking solutions to some of the potential causes of insecurity, be they security problems in the traditional sense or less traditional ones, be they economic, environmental or social. In introducing these aspects of security, I am consciously broadening the focus. Let me, therefore, turn to the concept of co-operative security.

There is a growing recognition that security can no longer be defined strictly in traditional military terms. Challenges to security and stability can come in diverse forms: unequal economic development, trade disputes,

overpopulation, migration and refugees, environmental degradation, and political and social factors such as internal oppression, terrorism and illicit trafficking in drugs. The view that security is multi-dimensional is, of course, not new nor is it a mystery to practitioners of diplomacy and foreign policy. Last July, at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Meeting, my Indonesian counterpart, Ali Alatas, mentioned to me several of these elements, stressing, for example, global environmental threats posed by ozone depletion, deforestation, marine pollution or practices such as driftnet fishing, the challenge to economic growth posed by protectionism and the abuse of human rights.

Such factors can lead to domestic instability, ethnic or class conflict, breakdowns in social cohesion, decline in the quality of life and, in summary, a sense of popular dissatisfaction or alienation that ultimately spills over into the international arena and impairs security.

Given the myriad of problems we face, the concept of co-operative security is -- indeed must be -- multi-dimensional. It goes beyond the more limited approaches of collective and mutual defence against aggression or destabilization. I do not wish to underestimate the importance of co-operation in the traditional, military security field. As an approach to regional security, collective and mutual defence arrangements will remain central to the preservation of national sovereignty and the protection of national interests. However, the security afforded by existing defence and alliance arrangements should allow regional states to engage in, and indeed should promote, more co-operative efforts to deal with unconventional, non-military challenges that endanger regional stability and national well-being.

Co-operative security emphasizes working relationships and functional links across a broad range of issues: regular and systematic dialogue, leading to the development of a multilateral "habit of dialogue"; discussion, co-operation and compromise. As I have stated previously, our present emphasis is on developing a formula that would allow countries to find a means that would encourage informal, and yet informed, discussion on a wide spectrum of issues.

Co-operative security is by definition evolutionary. It must be developed pragmatically. Some countries may have different areas of emphasis in co-operative security dialogue and the extent of their participation in different components may vary. Individual states may decide that regional or multilateral approaches

to specific issues are difficult to reconcile with their national interests; others may decide to postpone participation in any effort at all to construct a more co-operative approach to international or regional stability.

The development of a co-operative security dialogue depends on what is realistic and possible. Unrealistic goals have cut short many regional proposals dealing with security and stability. It is not our intention to join these well-meaning but unsuccessful initiatives. We prefer to work slowly and to take the time to develop consensus.

Let me bring some precision to the concept of co-operative security by seeking to draw a few boundaries and by giving some examples. As I have indicated several times in statements and conversations over the last six months, in proposing that the prospects be explored for enhanced co-operative security dialogue among the countries of the North Pacific Canada is not seeking to establish new institutions, nor are we advocating that we transplant mechanisms that have been successful elsewhere, notably in Europe, into the unique historical, political and cultural context of the Asia Pacific region.

Equally, we do not have in mind a process that would interfere in bilateral relationships or in sensitive issues that others in the region are best equipped to handle or prefer to handle in more restricted company. Let me be quite clear: I do not believe that broader regional dialogue should meddle in issues that the countries directly involved -- Japan and the U.S.S.R., for instance, in the case of the territorial question -- are best placed to deal with.

Moreover, we are fully cognizant of the sensitivity of disarmament and arms control issues, including naval arms control. Our intention is not to launch an initiative into these waters. We do not believe that there would be merit in premature action that has little chance of moving the process forward, nor do I view my own country as one to take a lead in this area. I repeat: Canada believes in what is realistic, effective and possible.

Finally, we do not envisage an inter-governmental process that would involve specific negotiating objectives, but rather one that is consultative, exploratory and informal.

We see a co-operative security dialogue as a regional or sub-regional multilateral exercise that brings

together a relatively small number of countries that share geography and have common interests. We have focused our initiative on the North Pacific with this in mind.

In the North Pacific we find four of the world's great powers; we find a full range of relationships across a broad range of issues, some of them marked by considerable tension, in some instances military tension. Yet, unlike the other sub-regions of Asia Pacific, which have at least some level of dialogue above the bilateral level, there is currently none that addresses a broad range of issues among the North Pacific countries.

We do share membership in several international and regional organizations, a dozen or so. That is quite an impressive figure, but none of these is a forum that allows for discussion of specifically North Pacific issues of common concern.

Whether a co-operative security dialogue involving governments is possible in the North Pacific is still a question to be answered -- I hope your deliberations in the next few days will help make the matter clearer -- but these factors do at least help to demonstrate a context and a need.

No one can deny that real and potential problems exist in the North Pacific. There are border disputes, areas in which there is armed confrontation, refugee problems, poverty, environmental degradation, issues about resources both on land and under the sea, vast social and demographic problems, international drug trafficking and others that cross international borders and even oceans. At the same time, we are witnessing politico-economic changes of enormous importance, not only in the relations between the superpowers but as a result, for example, of the prominence of Japan, the increasing role of China and the growing economic strength of many parts of the region.

There is a direct relation between security and prosperity; each can guarantee the other, and when one is absent the other is threatened. Unequal levels of economic development threaten political security, just as conflict is the enemy of prosperity and growth. North Pacific states have a tremendous investment in the growing prosperity of the region, and it is only prudent that we make every effort to secure that prosperity.

Canada is deeply committed to and supportive of the efforts of countries on the Pacific Rim to work together, especially in trade and economic areas, as is happening so effectively in APEC, the Pacific Basin Economic

Council (PBEC), and the Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference (PECC). Significant strides are being taken in APEC toward closer regional co-operation. Canada is fully supportive of, and actively engaged in, its work program. We see particular significance in two developments at the Senior Officials Meeting held in Korea a few weeks ago, in preparation for the Ministerial Meeting in Seoul in October. These are the decision to include in the work program the question of how regional and global trade liberalization can be advanced by the countries of APEC, and the initiation of broad economic policy dialogue among APEC members. Canada will be taking the lead in convening a group on the latter.

In stressing the economic dimension of security, I am not trying to upstage APEC or create a mini-APEC in the North Pacific. We in Canada are strongly supportive of APEC and the other mechanisms in Asia Pacific that are enhancing economic links and economic co-operation through dialogue. The experience of these discussions shows how useful such dialogue can be in dealing with regional economic issues. At the same time, APEC is young and still finding its way. It faces important challenges in the economic area to which it needs to be able to give its undivided attention. Its work is relevant to co-operative security because co-operative security has an important economic dimension, but the dialogue it has so effectively begun is not, in terms of either issues or participants, the one I have suggested we examine for the North Pacific.

I hope that you will have some stimulating and imaginative ideas about the role regional dialogue might play in addressing these challenges. The diversity of a region does require us to be sensitive to differing national experiences and different visions of the future. The examples of APEC and PECC, however, demonstrate that diversity need not be an impediment to co-operation. Success in advancing co-operative security in the North Pacific could serve as a model for other regions.

Perhaps these few words give you some sense of the thinking that has motivated Canada in seeking to promote a co-operative security dialogue in the North Pacific. Last July, I had suggested that we begin to explore the prospects for a more co-operative approach to the security of our sub-region, in the first instance at the non-governmental level -- an NGO track. I am pleased that you are taking part in that first exploration.

You are here as recognized experts in your fields of study to begin your own, independent, discussion and study of the concept of co-operative security. Your program is built around a group of policy research themes that I

find to be well-framed individually and, taken together, to make a good and effective start at fleshing out co-operative security. The range of issues is broad -- broader than governments in the area may be ready to address -- but I encourage you to explore and research all of them. This is more than a theoretical exercise. It addresses real issues. It will, if I am not mistaken in my judgment of your knowledge and skills, offer stimulating and probing analysis that may help us in governments to see our way ahead more clearly. The second half of Canada's initiative is an official track and your deliberations will tell us a great deal about both the issues that officials should be concerned with and the feasibility of dialogue at the official level.

It is not my intention to pre-empt your discussion or to prejudge your conclusions. As a very interested listener, however, I would like to pose some questions to you.

What are the most serious issues that manifest themselves in our region and affect its security? What are the traditional and non-traditional threats? How can we define and understand these better?

Are there themes or elements that are easier to address than others? Where should we start? How, and in what order, can we tackle the more difficult issues and which of them are not amenable to multilateral -- multilateral in the regional sense -- dialogue or multilateral solution? Which aspects of regional security are better left to bilateral channels? What type of forum is most appropriate for the pursuit of dialogue on each issue?

Let me repeat something I have said before. There is no intention on our part to force bilateral problems or arrangements onto multilateral agendas or to prescribe for specific problems some multilateral formula or forum. My contention is, though, that some level of co-operation and dialogue at the multilateral level can help create an atmosphere in which bilateral issues can be more readily, but still bilaterally, resolved. What could that dialogue focus on in the North Pacific?

I suppose the most important question is: Should we be pursuing such a dialogue? If we do not, what will be the consequences and losses to regional stability? If we do, what opportunities can we identify to enhance our security, our ability to live and co-operate with one another?

Your agenda for the next few days is full and demanding. I look forward with great interest to hearing your views, reading your conclusions, and listening to the advice you have to offer. I look forward as well to the continuation of your research, the papers that will be written, the tighter trans-Pacific network of scholarship that I hope will emerge, and the more considered and probing discussion that will take place at a larger NGO conference that I understand is being planned for later this year.

My best wishes go to you as you carry out this endeavour.