

Statement

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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
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Allow me first to thank Mr. Rémillard, the Institut international d'études administratives de Montréal and the École nationale d'administration publique for their kind invitation. The Government of Canada is proud to be associated with this important event.

Unless I am mistaken, the theme of this conference – *Globalized Economies: State-Private Sector Partnership?* – has prompted some speakers to talk in terms of finality. We are all products of our time and, in one way or another, we are all influenced by the thinking of the day. Perhaps this is why people speak so much about "endings" these days, and why the concept colours most of the talk we hear – whether the subject is the end of the Cold War, the end of the welfare state, of the nation state, of history or of communism.

We will also be hearing more and more about the end of the 20th century – I wouldn't want to leave that off my list. Perhaps we would be wise to set most of these expressions aside, bearing in mind how easy it is to use a turn of phrase simply because it is fashionable. We lose our sense of perspective when we focus only on the "end" of things, and are unable to find the inventive solutions needed for the problems of humankind.

A few days from now, the leaders of the world's seven most industrialized countries will be meeting in Halifax for their 21st summit. Whatever we might think about the changing nature of foreign policy and international relations, these summit meetings are always useful and relevant. They allow us not only to review the major problems facing us, but above all they give us an opportunity to collectively manage the changes affecting all of us.

Thus, over against the concept of finality we should set that of change. Change is something we experience daily. We find it in technology, science, intellectual life, culture and (of course) politics. None of these changes occurs in a vacuum. Technological change, for example, has an impact on politics, and vice versa.

The 20th century has been characterized by what I would call "the emancipation of the individual." In politics this takes the form of extending universal suffrage, developing the concept of individual rights and increasing the dialogue between politicians and voters. In fact, it demonstrates that the state, whatever form it may take, is not supreme. Emancipation of the individual means that the state is no longer the centre of all power, influence and action.

Paradoxically, the multiplication of stakeholders in international relations has renewed the importance of summits such as the G-7. The power of the individual is constantly on the increase, while governments' room to manoeuvre is on the decrease – as is their ability to defend the rights of the individual. In today's context of globalization, now more than ever the multilateral institutions must be strengthened in order to become more sensitive to the aspirations of the people whom they serve. The ongoing dialogue furnished by the G-7 summits is an important tool in helping to achieve this objective.

The summits have been the target of much criticism, however. Some see them as media extravaganzas, others as occasions for the leaders to approve texts that will never be acted on. Let me say that Prime Minister Chrétien has listened carefully to the criticism and has tried to make this summit a real working session for the leaders. Without diminishing the importance of the preparatory work done by the different sherpas, there is still much to be done by the leaders themselves.

Activity at the official level can never take the place of political will on the part of the various G-7 members. If a failure occurs, and if criticism of previous summits is warranted, it is at the political level. As for the Government of Canada, I can tell you that the Halifax Summit is an important part of its foreign policy agenda.

As host of the summit, we have the unique opportunity to set the agenda and the tone of the discussions.

Allow me, if you will, to touch on some of Canada's political objectives on the eve of the Halifax Summit. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien will take the opportunity when here tomorrow to talk about the economic aspect of the summit.

The issue of United Nations [UN] reform exemplifies the need for political will. This summit will allow us not only to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the UN but also to reaffirm our commitment to multilateral co-operation in the political and security areas. I intend to continue the dialogue that I began last year in New York when, on behalf of the Government, I presented Canada's proposals for reform of the United Nations - in particular its rapid reaction capability. Canada has conducted a study on the matter, and has undertaken to present the results at the next meeting of the General Assembly this autumn in New York.

Many voices have been heard of late challenging the validity of the UN's peacekeeping operations and its ability to fulfil its mandate. I would be the first to admit that the UN system has its weaknesses and shortcomings. However, despite its failures, I would not question its usefulness. On the contrary, I believe that we must draw some important lessons from the difficulties encountered by the UN recently in Somalia and right now in Bosnia. Canada intends to seize the opportunity given by Halifax to again affirm the necessity of working together toward the reforms that will give the UN a second wind. Herein lies one of the main merits of this kind of summit: it is a unique opportunity to pursue discussions on matters requiring the political will of states.

The UN has been asked to respond more rapidly and more effectively to counter threats to international peace and security. With its G-7 colleagues, Canada intends to examine ways of reinforcing the UN system's capacity for preventive diplomacy.

As you know, Canada is a firm supporter of multilateralism. Halifax must again confirm the multilateral commitment of our partners. The United Nations is depending increasingly on the assistance of non-governmental organizations [NGOs] and other regional security organizations in its job of economic and social development, human rights advocacy, and humanitarian aid. I think that better co-ordination between these various stakeholders is not only necessary but beneficial to the international community as a whole.

We see today the proliferation of new global challenges such as environmental deterioration, skyrocketing population growth, uncontrolled migration and organized crime. These are sufficient to convince us that multilateral dialogue is valuable and necessary.

Recent events have underscored the importance of having a strong, credible multilateral system where international security is concerned. Only a month ago, 178 countries made the extraordinary decision to extend indefinitely the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT], the world's most important arms control agreement. The momentum behind this decision cannot be halted. The NPT includes new members - in particular Ukraine, Algeria and Chile, our next partner in free trade. Countries not possessing nuclear arms have obtained undertakings from the five nuclear powers to work toward the complete elimination of such weapons. Canada is very pleased with this decision and will not let its partners forget their disarmament obligations.

We must take advantage of this momentum to complete a nuclear test ban agreement by 1996. I referred a moment ago to political will. With political will, I believe we can reach such an agreement. But we must get down to it and put some friendly pressure on some of our partners.

We must also begin negotiations to prohibit the production of fissile material for military purposes. For the time being, this means continuing to support Russia and the United States in their bilateral efforts to disarm, and steering the other nuclear states onto the path toward disarmament.

We must also talk about land mines, weapons that kill daily and indiscriminately. Each week, land mines kill or maim over 150 civilians. To end this tragedy, we must strengthen the multilateral instruments available to us, particularly the Convention on Conventional Weapons. I definitely intend to use Halifax as a forum for continuing the discussions that I have had with my colleagues on this issue on various occasions.

This summit will also give me the opportunity to pursue discussions on the international trade in conventional weapons, a theme that is of deep concern to me. Together, we must seek ways to reduce this scourge. Between 1986 and 1993, some 71.7 per cent of arms sales were to developing countries. If we act in unison, the international

community can truly make a difference and send a clear message to countries whose military spending exceeds their social spending. Faced with such an imbalance, we might be tempted to reconsider the relevance of our aid programs in light of the military spending of recipient countries. I have proposed to Japan that we adopt a concerted approach in this regard. I think that our two countries can expect to continue discussing relevant ideas on this issue. The summit thus gives us the opportunity of expanding our discussions to include the views of our G-7 colleagues.

Obviously we cannot impose our will on other countries, but certainly together we could influence their decisions. Canada alone cannot change the policies of, for example, some African countries. But surely, if we worked together in a team effort involving large numbers of other countries, significant change could happen in many of these countries.

And let me be very frank with you: those whose military spending is the highest are encouraged, unfortunately, by countries who belong to the G-7. In fact, the biggest exporters of arms are those who are permanent members of the Security Council. So it is unbelievable that on the one hand we ask the United Nations to send troops for peacekeeping missions, while on the other hand those who make these decisions to send peacekeeping missions are the ones who are selling the greatest number of arms to these countries.

So of course, we are realistic. We know that this is a big industry. It will not change overnight; but, indeed, it is something that Canada will want to pursue in co-operation with others. We think that Japan is very much on our side in this regard, and eventually, if other members of the G-7 realized the precarious positions they are in in regard to commercial arms sales in some of these countries, I think we could make substantial progress.

I said at the beginning of my speech that I would limit my remarks to the political aspect of the G-7. However, if you will allow me, I would like to give you a foretaste of the speech that the Prime Minister will deliver tomorrow. Please excuse me for talking about a subject that is both political and economic.

Canada has strongly urged that the G-7 leaders examine the institutions of the Bretton Woods system. This issue will play a very important role in our discussions in Halifax, thanks to the leadership of Prime Minister Chrétien.

The Bretton Woods institutions are the products of a bygone era. Although they themselves have undertaken some attempts at reform, these efforts have never been guided by clear and concerted political leadership. The Halifax Summit allows us to join together and give the International Monetary Fund [IMF] and the World Bank a clear vision.

A few moments ago, I talked about the emancipation of the individual. The IMF and the World Bank must clearly focus more on the individual and on how their decisions affect the people involved. The activities of the Bretton Woods institutions affect not only the stability of the macro-economic system but also the lives of millions of individuals. The IMF and the World Bank must work with other regional institutions and with non-governmental organizations to help individuals take control of their own destinies.

The regional development banks also play an important role in this regard. The most effective regional development banks simply must co-ordinate their activities better with those of the World Bank and the IMF.

While recognizing the growing power of the individual, we must acknowledge the dangers of exclusion. The Bretton Woods institutions must help solve the problem of countries that are structurally excluded from the international system.

We will soon create a new multilateral institution, the World Trade Organization [WTO]. It also has an important role to play in fighting exclusion and ensuring that the developing countries have full access to the global market.

Responsibilities must clearly be better distributed between all of these stakeholders: UN agencies, the IMF, the World Bank, the regional development banks, NGOs and (of course) countries themselves.

The chance to host the G-7 Summit, with all that this entails, comes only once every seven years. I think that Canada, for its part, has done its best to make this a successful summit – one where substance takes precedence over procedure, one where leaders must make many difficult decisions.

The follow-up accorded to our Halifax discussions is no less important than the work done so far in preparation for the summit. As host country, Canada has the chairmanship of the summit until year's end. We are determined to use this mandate to help bring about a follow-up to our discussions. This is doubtless a weak point in the history of the G-7 that absolutely must be corrected. I can tell you that Prime Minister Chrétien is aware of this question.

The second Annual Forum on Canada's International Relations lends itself well to this kind of follow-up exercise. The Forum will take place in September and will focus on Canada and the international institutions. I expect to obtain from the participants their views on the Halifax Summit and their ideas concerning the direction we should take in preparation for the next G-7 meeting.

I began my remarks by talking about change. Change applies not only to the issues examined by the G-7 but also to the conduct of summits

themselves. Our peoples expect their respective governments to address the real problems that confront them. Our peoples expect their governments to make difficult but necessary choices. I think that they are entitled to expect the leaders of the seven most industrialized countries to adopt the same attitude at their annual meeting.

I have just spoken of "real problems," and this leads me to make a connection with what is currently happening in Quebec. The people of Quebec are aware of the challenges that we must all face, and they rightly expect those who govern them to take concrete action. The Government of Canada is firmly committed to this course. In this regard, the G-7 constitutes an ideal forum where we can discuss the key issues of our time, such as those that I have just mentioned, with other world powers, openly and as equals.

This exceptional asset fully deserves to be emphasized in Quebec's current political situation. In an era of globalization, we cannot ignore the fact that a separate Quebec would deprive itself of all the benefits that it derives from our membership in the G-7. We also cannot overlook the fact that, by ceasing to be part of Canada, Quebecers could no longer make their voices heard on the international scene as they do at present.

The Halifax Summit is thus very significant and something for all of us to think about.

In conclusion, allow me again to thank the organizers of this colloquium. The changes addressed by the speakers are by no means the last that will confront us. In fact, change will probably be occurring with greater frequency than ever before. The lesson drawn from our deliberations should be one of partnership. Thus, the best way to manage change is to confront it together. This is why an exercise such as yours, and the one coming up in Halifax, is of such importance.

Thank you.