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# CANADA - UNITED KINGDOM Chamber of Commerce 85th Year 1921-2006

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## 85th Year Celebratory lunch with the Right Honourable Tony Blair MP, British Prime Minister, 16 October 2006

Thank you Victor for your stunning introduction. In general terms, many thanks indeed for your kindness. As you heard from Victor Dahdaleh, I will be making a speech and then answering a few questions afterwards. I just wanted to say how delighted I am to be here at the



*Prime Minister Rt Hon Tony Blair MP with Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, President of the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce*

Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce function today and to thank everyone who has organised it. Thanks to the Reverend Abram for the magnificent grace before we began. He is the Chaplain of the Tower of London and was reminding me that that is where the remains of the Patron Saint of politicians, Sir Thomas More, are. They did assassinations slightly more effectively in those days!

The one occasion during my time as Prime Minister that I look back on with real pleasure is my address to both Houses of the Canadian Parliament in February 2001, and I said then that our countries are allies of long standing, we share a sovereign, we are partners in the UN and NATO, we are the only two members of both the Commonwealth and the G8. Our trade and investment links, as you know here, are extensive and I



*The Prime Minister addressing the Chamber*

should like to pay tribute to the Chamber of Commerce for the important role that it has played in promoting trade between our two countries for almost 90 years, I think.

And on his visit to London in July, as you were saying, the Prime Minister of Canada and I discussed these issues and we went through what is almost a kind of checklist of what happens at a meeting between any two world leaders in today's global politics – trade links, energy, climate change, new conflicts in the world, and notably of course our joint endeavours in Afghanistan.

And today what I would like to do is obviously speak about the trade links and investment links between our two countries, but then try and go a little bit wider into the relationship between Britain and Canada today. And I think the starting point is that we bring to these problems the same set of democratic values – protection for human rights, individual freedom, an economy open to the world,



*The Prime Minister addressing the Chamber*

the rule of law in a just society. And they are a very special inheritance for our two countries, and they have never been more important frankly. It is commonly said of British Prime Ministers that they begin their time in office with domestic concerns and end it consumed by foreign affairs, and that is true I suppose of what is said of Prime Ministers and Presidents the world over. But actually what we are witnessing is that domestic and foreign policy are merging ever more closely together. And the age-old question of democratic politics – how do you reconcile freedom with security? – is now being played out globally and the debate is often framed as if there was a simple choice, either you kind of construct a fortress around your country and shut it off from the world, or



*Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh introduces the Prime Minister*

alternatively you open up to the world with all the political, and economic and security threats that the world poses and there is nothing you can do about it.

And you mentioned the third way and I think in a sense what our country is trying to do, and Canada as well, is to try and reconcile the need to be an open, strong, trading nation that plays its full part in international affairs, but at the same time by doing so makes our common future more secure, more able to withstand the enormous threats that we face in our world today.

I said that Prime Minister Harper and I had discussed three big questions on his first visit to London in July,



*The Prime Minister meeting Canadian High Commissioner H.E. James Wright with Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh*

and let me try and take each one of those in turn, and first, one that is very obvious for the Chamber of course, and that is trade. Again the issue to do with open or closed in respect of trade has been a long time in the making. Both right and left in British politics bear the scars of it. I think it was something like 160 years ago that the British Conservative Party split over the question of free trade and imperial preference, and then frankly for a long period of time the Left in British politics thought that the way to withstand the economic pressures was through protectionism. And now worldwide these forces of protectionism are gathering again on both left and right and I want to spend a moment saying why I think it is so important that we resist them.

The truth is we cannot rebuild tariff walls. The short-term security that would be bought by such a course

would be at the expense of long-term prosperity. The UK and Canada are actually well placed to compete in the global marketplace. We are gateways to two of the largest trading blocs in the world – the European Union and NAFTA. Britain is Canada's third largest export market, over one-third of Canada's European exports come to Britain, and the UK is the largest European investor in Canada.

Now it is absolutely crucial in my view that we as two countries that have everything to benefit from open trade stand up for open trade in the international trading system. That is why the Doha Development Round is important, it is also important to return to EU-Canada trade and investment enhancement



*The Prime Minister with Mr Nigel Bacon Executive Director and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh President of the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce*

agreement negotiations and get those in the right place and we should be, our two countries, making it clear, particularly after the mid-term elections in the US, that we can return to this issue of the world trade round and get it sorted out.

However, the agenda for our bilateral dialogue also goes much wider, from improving the management of our research budgets, to drafting improvements in the efficiency of public procurement, better cities, developing science and innovation and this latter point, science and innovation, is an especially important point of contact. Some of the best scientists in the world from the UK and Canada are



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Dahdaleh with Mr Michael Lagopoulos, President & CEO RBC Global Private Banking, Mr Paul Patterson Head of RBC GPB British Isles & Mr Phil Cutts VP Structured Products RBC GPB, a Gold sponsor of the lunch*



*The Prime Minister with Mr Robert Dorrance, Chairman & CEO TD Securities and Mr Martin Walton, Vice Chair, Head of Europe & Asia Pacific TD Securities, a Gold sponsor of the lunch*

collaborating on, just to give you a few examples, stem cell science, urban energy efficiency, the structure and function of proteins which have a role to play in the development of cancer, the genetic mutations behind diseases such as asthma, diabetes, cancer and heart disease. Now I think for our two countries it is very important to realise there are enormous opportunities that beckon in this field of science and innovation and how we can collaborate together.

On 2 November I will be giving what they entitle a lecture on science policy. I should say I am the person least qualified to give a lecture on science policy, however it will be a speech about the future of science and the role of it in our public life, but also in our economy. And one of the things that I will be talking about then is how government, if it operates



*The Prime Minister with Mr Iain Willatt, Finance Director & Ms Anette Raynor Managing Director Canadian Affairs, a Gold sponsor of the lunch and Mr Glen Chip, Managing Director Cook Airlines*

intelligently, can help turn scientific creativity into commercial benefit, and we are actually learning a lot and preparing for this speech from the work that Canada has done in successfully commercialising its research.

There is a benefit I think in areas like bioscience, but I think that this will become increasingly important in relation to the issue of energy and climate change. Now here again is an area which is an area of

enormous fruitful collaboration between our two countries. Canada of course is a country that is already playing its part, as Stephen Harper was saying I think when he was here and told this Chamber, it is becoming in effect a new energy super power. Hydro-electricity provides two-thirds of Canada's electricity, a strong hydrogen economy is developing and developing research into clean nuclear power, and also Canada is emerging as a world leader in carbon sequestration.

We in this country are doing our bit also. We will meet our Kyoto targets, we are stepping up something like fivefold our investment in renewable energy, we have got our own carbon sequestration project under way and we have actually set a goal for a 60% reduction in our emissions by 2050 with a series of staging posts over the next few years in order to get there.



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh with Mr David Tudor, Director of Business Development and Ms Sucharita Sethi, Head of Communications, Nexen Petroleum, a Gold sponsor of the lunch*

Now the reason I say this is important is that I know this has been a difficult issue for Canada, it has been a difficult issue for the United States of America and for many other countries around the world. I am convinced of this however: the issues to do with energy security and climate change are coming together in a dramatic way in today's world.

Just before I came here this morning I opened the Langeled pipeline which comes from Norway down



*The Prime Minister receiving a commemorative book from Mr George Iacobescu, CEO Canary Wharf Group Ltd, a Charter member of the Chamber*



*The Prime Minister with Reverend Paul Abram, Chaplain to the Chapels Royal, Tower of London and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh*

to Humberside in England. It is going to provide something like 20% of our gas needs over the coming years. At the same time we are going to have to work on how we manage carbon sequestration and ensuring that the fossil fuel development is done in an environmentally beneficial way. We know that China is building a new coal-fired power station round about I think every two weeks, there is going to be a massive demand for energy. Now here is an opportunity for us if we are intelligent. Both our countries have been involved in energy production, Canada as I was saying is a major super power in the energy field, both to be suppliers that are secure and to be people at the forefront of the technological developments in climate



*The Prime Minister in final preparation for his address to the Chamber*

change is an enormous business opportunity. We have gone in the UK from 4 or 5 years ago about 150,000 people being employed in environmental technology to almost half a million today, that will increase even more so in the years to come. There is a huge amount of collaboration that we can do, and the work that we are doing, both in Canada and in the UK, I think there is a tremendous field for collaboration here that we should develop.

We also are going to be aware of this, we are going to go from a situation in the UK where we are at the moment 80 – 90% self-sufficient in oil and gas, to 80 – 90% importing oil and gas literally within a period of about 10 or 15 years. And the reason that nuclear power is back on the agenda is very simple, if we want to grow with proper energy security and we want to do so in an environmentally sustainable way, then we

have to look at replacing the existing nuclear capacity. So in our trade, in areas to do with energy and climate change there is a great role for cooperation between our two countries.

And that leads me to the third big question that I discussed with the Canadian Prime Minister when he was here - the conflicts we face in the world. This new global terrorism, people talk about it as a clash of civilisations, I personally think it is a clash about civilisation, it is about the values that prevail in the world and in this sense the question of whether democratic values are the values that prevail in an era of globalisation is at the core of this conflict. And what we have is an opportunity, if we stand strong, to take on a global terrorism that is a concerted and



*The Prime Minister with Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh and Mr Peter Roxborough, Senior Verticals Marketing Manager, EMEA & Mr James Hart, Director Enterprise Marketing EMEA, Research in Motion, a Gold sponsor of the lunch*

deliberate attack on our way of life, physically and in terms of its values, and that has killed thousands of people worldwide and will continue to kill more people unless we confront and defeat it.

Now it is true that the answer to this is not to be found in military means alone, it also means that we have to combat it at the level of ideas. One of the reasons why I am so passionate about making sure we make progress in the dispute between Israel and Palestine is precisely because I think that, if we are able to make progress on this, it removes one major



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh with Mr Chris Slemeck, General Manager & Mr Christos Dvletoglou, Sales Manager, London West Canon Business Centre, a Gold sponsor of the lunch*

excuse from terrorists who use this conflict as they use other conflicts in order to gain support for their ideology, and I thank Canada for the work that it has been doing in working with us on this issue.

But both of us have suffered from terrorism and we have to stand together, as indeed we have done before, to fight against this and to fight against this in every arena in which it threatens us. Now one of the frontlines of this new battle is Afghanistan, and we are working there together to help President Karzai and the people of Afghanistan build a democracy and combat the forces of extremism which seek to oppose them. And it is worth just understanding that for all the challenges we have achieved a great deal. 4.5 million



*The Prime Minister answering questions at the lunch*



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh with Ms Debbie Marshall, UK Director Zoom Airlines a Silver sponsor of the lunch*

Afghan refugees have returned home; there are 6 million children that now go to school, including of course millions of girls; there are something like over 14,000 community projects that have been financed; and health clinics have increased by over 60%. In Helmand and Kandahar British and Canadian forces are performing in conditions of considerable danger and difficulty with the utmost professionalism and courage. I pay tribute to all those who have given their lives in this cause, and for their sake and for the sake of the Afghan people we can, and we must, and we will see this mission through.

I know you have found it difficult in Canada, difficult for the families of those that have lost loved ones, because you have lost over 40 soldiers this year and



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh enjoying the Vote of Thanks by the High Commissioner*

the death of a diplomat also. This is a tragedy for the families concerned, it is very difficult in public opinion, as we know here also, and other countries, many countries have lost brave servicemen in this struggle. But I believe it is absolutely vital for our security, not just global security but in our countries, that we stay the course in Afghanistan, that we see this mission through and that we make it clear we will not allow Afghanistan again to be used as a training ground for the terrorists of al Qaeda or for the brutal oppression of the Taleban. It is a just and a noble cause and we should see it through.

I also believe however that it is important that we confront the serious challenge of Iran and its nuclear ambitions and missile programme, its support for



*Canadian High Commissioner H.E. James Wright delivering the Vote of Thanks*

terrorism against Israel and for extremists in Lebanon and Iraq and its disregard for the liberty of its own citizens. The leadership that Britain and Canada have shown in the Atomic Energy Authority, in the UN and at the G8 has focused international attention on Iran, and Canada has played a leading role in calling on Iran to respect human rights and political freedoms.

I would also incidentally like to pay tribute to Canada's work in supporting the reconstruction efforts in Iraq. Since 2003 international reconstruction efforts again have led, despite all the obvious difficulties, to the rehabilitation of some 150 healthcare facilities and over 5,000 schools, and more than 140,000 teachers will have been trained by the end of this year and over 5 million children will have received life-saving vaccinations. And by launching the International Compact, Iraq's own



*The Prime Minister with Mr Rod Reynolds, CEO, Scotiabank Plc, Board and Charter member of the Chamber*

government has shown its determination to build a more stable and prosperous future.

I also applaud Canada's contribution to the African Union force in Darfur and to the humanitarian assistance there. It is now imperative frankly that the United Nations takes over, that President Bashir stops his military offensive and that his government engages with rebels who continue to reject the Darfur peace agreement.

Now in all of these issues Canada and the United Kingdom stand strongly together. We share the same values; we have a common interest in trade; the field



*The Prime Minister and Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh with Ms Nancy Duncan, Membership & Events Co-ordinator of the Chamber*

of energy and the environment opens up a whole new horizon of collaboration between our two countries; and in the most real and difficult sense in Afghanistan our forces are fighting alongside each other to combat the new global terrorist threat that we face.

That is the reason why the relationship between our two countries matters. The trouble with the good relationships in the world is that if you are not careful you spend little time actually celebrating and focusing on them precisely because they are good. And every so often I think it is important for us, our two countries, to take a step back, just evaluate how far we have come, how important it is that we develop the relationship further and celebrate the fact that in a world of danger and difficulty and challenge today there are two countries of our weight and of our ability, with our alliances, to make our influence felt in the

world who share so much of a common vision for a shared future.

Victor, as you know, is very influential in the Global Initiative of President Clinton. The whole purpose of that is to say that in a world in which things are increasingly interdependent, where what happens in one part of the world affects another, then the idea of global co-operation as a response to globalisation is an absolutely necessary part of making the future work for us.



*The Prime Minister with Ms Carmen Storey, Business Development Manager, Mr Andy Burgess, Director, Mr Hani Quashai, Director, Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, Chairman and Mr Themos Koukoullis, Office Manager, Dadco Group, Platinum sponsor and Charter member of the Chamber*

In a world in which things are increasingly interdependent, where what happens in one part of the world affects another, then the idea of global co-operation as a response to globalisation is an absolutely necessary part of making the future work for us.

I think we have an immense challenge today at virtually every level. Because the world is such a dangerous place, because economically the pace of change is so great, in security terms there is this new terrorism that people barely comprehend and yet find frightening and difficult to deal with, the greatest danger for countries like Britain or Canada is that we think we can insulate ourselves against the difficult decisions by the protectionism, or what you might call nativism, in other words being anti the strength and possibility of immigration, or isolationism in foreign policy.



*The Prime Minister with Mr Richie Clark, Partner & Mr Rob Brandt, Managing Partner, McCarthy Tétrault, Board and Charter Member of the Chamber with Mr Victor Phillip Dahdaleh*



Some of the 400 members and their guests enjoying the lunch

And the interesting thing about the world today is that as much as there are debates between right and left of a very recognisable sort, there is another major issue going on in the world today, it is open versus closed, it is whether the way that you respond to these global challenges is opening up to the world, managing the consequences of change, being



Members and their guests enjoying the lunch

unafraid to be out there, engaged, part of what is happening, or those who because of their fear at the challenge of change hunker down, try to insulate and cut themselves off from the process of changing, thinking they will succeed thereby.

Now I think with both our two countries we have got for very obvious reasons ties of history and values and so on, we have got the same attitudes. We know it is a



Members and their guests enjoying the lunch

dangerous world, we know it is highly competitive, but we have sufficient confidence in our own countries and sufficient self-belief in our nations that we can go out and meet these challenges confidently. The work that we do together is going to be important. Both of us are big allies of the United States of America, both of us regard that alliance as crucial for our countries, but that alliance should be a boost, and not a hindrance, to the close relations between our two countries. We have got something to give in this world, something very important, something that really matters, something that if it is allowed to flourish can give people a sense that the values that our two countries are based on are the values that should inform globalisation, that they are the way through the problems the world faces because in the end they are not western values, they are not Canadian or British, they are the values of the human spirit, they are important from whatever part of the world people come. And if the response that we give to a world that is posing these challenges is one of confidence and self-belief in the values that we hold dear, we are far more likely to succeed.

And so today this is an important celebration obviously of the Chamber of Commerce and the immense importance of the work that you do. But I wanted to celebrate something else as well, the relationship, the history, but also the future that binds our two countries - Britain and Canada - together and say to you that so far as I am concerned I hope and believe that that relationship will strengthen still further, it is important for our two countries, and just as important as that, it is important for the world.

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Above Left: The Prime Minister being greeted by Mr Derek Picot, Regional General Manager, Jumeirah Carlton Tower. Above Right: The Prime Minister with Mr Victor Phillip Dahdah and Mr Derek Picot





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