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TOWARDS A CANADIAN ARCTIC STRATEGY

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This paper is written in memory of Mary Anne Brinckman.

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canadian International Council, its Senate or its Board of Directors.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arctic is opening up at a rate that continues to astonish. Climate change, the prospect of easier access and transit, and the expectation of long term growth in global demand for oil and gas have evoked unprecedented interest from the world at large and first of all from the eight nations of the region: the Eight are Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States. But while the strategic significance of the Arctic is increasing rapidly, Canada has no strategy for the region in its entirety. This paper aims to start us on the way to one.

Given an extensive frontage on the Arctic Ocean and, after Russia, the largest land holdings in this part of the world, Canada has a great deal at stake in the evolution of the Arctic as an international political region, specifically in the changing proportion of cooperation and conflict among the ice states and in their dealings with non-Arctic states who may want in. Should change favour conflict, not only Canada but the region as a whole will suffer the costs and risks of strategic rivalry and all manner of collaboration foregone. Vigorous cooperation is surely Canada's preference.

A Canadian strategy will strive to channel the unfolding story of the region in a direction that mutes conflict and enables all to exercise due care in the exploitation and enjoyment of a shared natural environment. Its twin watchwords will be stewardship and sovereignty. Stewardship is defined here as locally informed governance that not only polices but also shows respect and care for the natural environment and living things in it. Stewardship enhances national sovereignty in the conditions of natural and human interdependence that prevail in the Arctic. No way stinting on the need to ensure sovereign possession, a Canadian Arctic strategy will strive for cooperative stewardship throughout the region.

Closely examined for purposes of international cooperation, the Arctic proves to be at most a region of sub-regions. The prerequisites for region-wide cooperation are in short supply. Accordingly, a Canadian strategy will not aim directly at outcomes on specific issues such as adaptation to climate change, management of commercial shipping, or joint emergency preparedness. Instead, it will foster the very capacity for pan-Arctic collaboration. Governed by three interrelated objectives, it will give rise to new initiatives in our bilateral as well as multilateral relations with interested states.

The **objectives** of the strategy that is envisaged here are:

- (1) *elevation* of Arctic international relations from the official to the highest political level;
- (2) *engagement* first of the United States and, thereby, of the Russian Federation on behalf of cooperative stewardship and
- (3) *invigoration* of regional governance, which is to say the Arctic Council.

Overall, this strategy should see Canada lead the way in making Arctic international relations at once less dependent upon the domestic northern agendas and self-regard of the Eight regional countries, and more responsive to the global priorities and shared interests of non-Arctic states as well as the Eight themselves. It should see Canada encourage others not so much to commit to the Arctic region as to act on the view that their global interests can be served effectively by new Arctic engagements.

Initiatives to be taken under the strategy are principally:

- Elicit US interest in an *Agreement on Basic Principles of Arctic International Relations*, patterned on the 1972 BPA on American-Soviet Relations and intended both to encourage Russian stewardship cooperation in exchange for security reassurance and to provide the United States with an opportunity for a new departure in relations with the Russian Federation;

- Lead the Eight to an *enlargement of the Arctic Council* in which interested and capable non-Arctic states participate freely as consultative parties, making contributions to a new Arctic Fund that are matched by the ice states who continue to hold the consensus of an energized forum that coordinates and supports stewardship cooperation undertaken by varying combinations of Arctic and non Arctic states;
- *Stabilize and deepen Arctic relations with the United States* by surrounding the Canada-US agreement to disagree on the Northwest Passage with a thickening bodyguard of bilateral cooperation, developing a unified North American approach to the evolution of the Arctic as a region, building stronger ties with Greenland as a North American partner, actively supporting US global arms control and disarmament positions that make for reduced conflict in the Arctic, seeking US agreement to lead jointly in a search and rescue exercise at the North Pole with icebreakers from Arctic and interested non-Arctic states and so on;
- With *Germany*, discuss access to Canadian high Arctic natural gas reserves, Arctic Council enlargement and Arctic stewardship potential of the Russian proposal for a renewed Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;
- With *China, and also Norway if thought appropriate*, discuss potential for joint action to expand pan-Arctic and also transpolar intercontinental trade, together with Arctic Council enlargement and Canadian Arctic gas in conversation with China alone and
- Give priority to Arctic Fund allocations to capacity-building for permanent participants in the Council, and for Russian stewardship.

Of these initiatives in building preconditions for greater cooperative stewardship, engagement of the United States and Arctic Council enlargement are most critical.

Finally, there are preconditions to be met in Canada if we are to lead effectively. The challenge here is one of leadership in a country that, not unlike others of the Eight, is preoccupied with Arctic possessions and unaccustomed to a pan-Arctic view of the region and opportunities to shape the conditions in which sovereignty is exercised. The challenge, as elsewhere, is also one of raising Arctic issues from the bureaucratic to the highest political level. The two dozen recommendations that conclude this paper begin therefore with a proposal that the Prime Minister take personal responsibility for Canada's future as an Arctic nation and for the creation and execution of an Arctic strategy.

RÉSUMÉ

L'Arctique évolue à un rythme qui ne cesse d'étonner. Les changements climatiques, l'éventualité d'y accéder et d'y circuler plus librement, de même que les perspectives d'une augmentation à long terme de la demande mondiale de pétrole et de gaz, suscitent un intérêt sans précédent à l'échelle internationale et en tout premier lieu parmi les huit nations de la région. Mais si l'importance stratégique de l'Arctique s'accroît très rapidement, le Canada ne possède toujours pas de stratégie pour l'ensemble de la région. Ce document vise à jeter les bases d'une telle stratégie.

Vu la longueur de son littoral arctique et l'importance de ses avoirs fonciers dans cette région du globe – seule la Russie en possède davantage, le Canada a des intérêts considérables à défendre face à la transformation de l'Arctique en une région politique internationale, pour ce qui est notamment de l'évolution du rapport entre coopération et conflit parmi les nations arctiques et de leurs échanges avec d'autres États qui lorgneraient leur part du gâteau. Si cette évolution devait tourner au conflit, le Canada mais aussi l'ensemble de la région écoperaient des coûts et des risques d'une rivalité stratégique et de la fin de toute forme de collaboration. Or le Canada préférerait sûrement une vigoureuse coopération.

Toute stratégie canadienne doit viser à canaliser l'actuelle transformation de la région en vue de tempérer les conflits et de favoriser les mesures nécessaires à l'exploitation comme à la jouissance d'un environnement naturel partagé. Et une telle stratégie doit reposer sur le double mot d'ordre d'intendance et de souveraineté. L'intendance désigne ici une gouvernance axée sur le plan local qui assure non seulement le maintien de l'ordre mais aussi le respect et la protection de l'environnement naturel et de tout ce qu'il renferme de vivant. Elle vient donc renforcer la souveraineté nationale en conformité avec l'interdépendance des éléments humains et naturels qui caractérise l'Arctique. C'est ainsi que, sans rien céder de la propriété souveraine du Canada, notre stratégie de l'Arctique doit pleinement miser sur l'intendance concertée de l'ensemble de la région.

Lorsqu'on en fait un examen attentif sous l'angle de la coopération internationale, l'Arctique se révèle tout au plus une région composée de sous-régions. Or les conditions préalables à une coopération qui s'étendrait à tout son territoire sont encore peu nombreuses. La stratégie du Canada évitera donc de viser directement des enjeux précis comme l'adaptation aux changements climatiques, la gestion de la navigation commerciale ou la préparation conjointe aux situations d'urgence. Elle visera plutôt à promouvoir les capacités réelles d'une collaboration panarctique. Guidée par trois objectifs interdépendants, elle doit susciter de nouvelles initiatives touchant nos relations à la fois bilatérales et multilatérales avec les États concernés.

Les **objectifs** de la stratégie proposée sont les suivants :

- (1) *élévation* du statut des relations internationales dans l'Arctique de leur actuel niveau officiel au plus haut niveau politique ;
- (2) *engagement* initial des États-Unis en faveur d'une intendance coopérative, qui entraînera celui de la Fédération de Russie ;
- (3) *dynamisation* de la gouvernance régionale, c'est-à-dire du Conseil de l'Arctique.

Globalement, cette stratégie permettrait au Canada de frayer la voie à des relations internationales dans l'Arctique à la fois moins dépendantes des programmes du Nord nationaux et moins centrées sur les huit pays de la région, tout en étant plus réceptives aux priorités mondiales et aux intérêts communs des États non arctiques comme des huit pays eux-mêmes. Elle verrait le Canada inciter les autres pays non pas à s'engager nécessairement dans la région mais plutôt à agir selon la perspective que de nouveaux engagements en Arctique pourront efficacement servir leur intérêts généraux.

Les principales **initiatives** issues de cette stratégie sont les suivantes :

- Stimuler l'intérêt des États-Unis en faveur d'un *Accord sur les principes fondamentaux gouvernant les relations internationales dans l'Arctique* inspiré du BPA sur les relations américano-soviétiques de 1972, qui inciterait la Russie à collaborer à l'intendance en échange de garanties de sécurité tout en offrant aux États-Unis l'occasion d'un nouveau départ dans ses relations avec ce pays ;
- Convaincre les Huit d'*élargir le Conseil de l'Arctique* aux États non arctiques intéressés et compétents, qui seraient invités à y participer librement au titre de parties consultatives et à faire des contributions à un nouveau Fonds de l'Arctique, lesquelles seraient doublées par les États arctiques qui maintiennent le consensus d'un forum dynamisé ayant pour tâche de coordonner et de soutenir une intendance concertée assurée par un groupe variable d'États arctiques et non arctiques ;
- *Stabiliser et approfondir les relations arctiques avec les États-Unis* en encadrant d'une solide coopération bilatérale l'entente canado-américaine sur leur désaccord touchant le Passage du Nord-Ouest, de manière à élaborer une approche nord-américaine unifiée sur l'évolution de l'Arctique en tant que région, à raffermir les liens avec le Groenland en tant que partenaire nord-américain, à soutenir activement les prises de position américaines sur le désarmement et le contrôle mondial des armements propices à la réduction des conflits dans l'Arctique, à obtenir l'appui des États-Unis dans la gestion conjointe des exercices de recherche et sauvetage menés au Pôle Nord avec les brise-glace des États arctiques et non arctiques intéressés, et ainsi de suite ;
- Discuter avec l'*Allemagne* de l'accès aux réserves canadiennes de gaz naturel du Haut-Arctique, de l'élargissement du Conseil de l'Arctique et du potentiel d'intendance de l'Arctique que renferme la proposition russe d'une Conférence sur la sécurité et la coopération en Europe renouvelée ;
- Discuter avec la *Chine, de même qu'avec la Norvège si la situation s'y prête*, de la possibilité d'une action commune visant à accroître le commerce aussi bien panarctique que transpolaire intercontinental, de l'élargissement du Conseil de l'Arctique et de la question du gaz canadien, qui fait actuellement l'objet de discussions avec la Chine seulement ;
- Donner priorité aux allocations du Fonds de l'Arctique visant à renforcer les capacités des pays membres du Conseil et à favoriser l'intendance russe.

Parmi ces initiatives qui établiraient les conditions préalables d'une intendance coopérative renforcée, les plus critiques sont l'engagement des États-Unis et l'élargissement du Conseil de l'Arctique.

Enfin, le Canada doit lui-même remplir certaines conditions préalables pour jouer efficacement son rôle de chef de file. Le défi en est un de leadership pour un pays qui, semblablement aux autres États des Huit, se préoccupe de ses possessions dans la région tout en étant peu familier d'une vision panarctique et des possibilités de façonner les conditions d'exercice de la souveraineté. Comme ailleurs, le défi consiste aussi à élever les questions arctiques du niveau bureaucratique au plus haut niveau politique. La première des deux douzaines de recommandations qui concluent ce document propose donc au premier ministre canadien de prendre à son propre compte la responsabilité d'assurer l'avenir du Canada en tant que nation arctique ainsi que d'élaborer puis de mettre en œuvre une véritable stratégie pour l'Arctique.

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TOWARDS A CANADIAN ARCTIC STRATEGY

Franklyn Griffiths¹

INTRODUCTION

The Arctic is opening up at an astonishing rate. It draws more and more of us southerners to want in, but from a safe distance as though from a cruise ship. Enticed but leery, we marvel at the physical transformations that make the region less forbidding. Climate change, the prospect of easier access and the expectation of long term growth in global demand for oil and gas have evoked unprecedented interest from the world at large, and first of all from the attentive publics and decision-makers of the eight nations of the region. Despite inevitable variation in the way the Arctic Eight look at things, they are now less ambiguous in their Arctic attachments, more material in their Arctic interests and nowhere more so than in Canada. Today, however, we must also absorb the implications of the global recession that has set in. With oil and gas prices returned to something like old lows together with worldwide energy demand, the level of activity in the Arctic is not what it was in 2008. Public interest persists, but resource development and, to a lesser extent, geopolitical interest in the region, have been set back and will remain so until prices recover. Over the next while, climate change and media hype on the "cold rush" for Arctic seabed rights will be the main drivers of southern attention to the northernmost part of the world. We in Canada are presented with an opportunity to plan and prepare now for cooperative stewardship, as distinct from self help and unsustainable resource exploitation, in the cycle of renewed regional development that is sure to come upon us.

Given a very extensive saltwater frontage and, after Russia, the largest land holdings, Canada has a great deal at stake in the evolution of the Arctic as a political region, specifically in the changing proportion of cooperation and conflict among the ice states and in their dealings with non-Arctic states and entities who may want in. Should change favour interstate conflict, not only Canada but also the Arctic in its entirety will suffer the costs and risks of political-military rivalry and all manner of collaboration foregone. Alternatively, should conflict be favoured only marginally when cooperation is inherently difficult to achieve, simple neglect of the Arctic environment and residents there could be the net result. Vigorous cooperation is surely Canada's preference. This paper therefore lays out the elements of a Canadian strategy that would steer the unfolding story of the region in a direction that mutes conflict and enables all to exercise due care in the exploitation and enjoyment of a shared natural environment. The twin watchwords of such a strategy are stewardship and sovereignty. We should have the strategy in hand and already be moving on it by the spring of 2013, when Canada assumes the chair of the Arctic Council. There is not a lot of time.

Cooperation and conflict are produced in the Arctic in particular ways that a Canadian strategy for the region will ignore at its own peril. Intimate knowledge of the regional context and of how things are accomplished locally is a precondition for the success of anything we might venture. Knowledge of this kind is the subject of the first part of the discussion that follows. It goes a long way in the structuring of an approach to the region. No less significant are the enabling actions that need to be taken if Arctic international cooperation is to unfold as it should. We distinguish here between what it would first require to be able to shape a future for the region, and what specific measures we would take for cooperative stewardship if given the capacity to act effectively. Strengthening the capacity for collective action as such is our second major concern and the heart of this paper. Nor can we confine ourselves to the merits of what needs doing "out there." A strategy of stewardship will require strong leadership in this country. It must bring us out from behind the lines of our sovereign jurisdiction and into the thick of a region that is still quite unfamiliar. This is the focus of a third set of comments. We end with recommendations.

¹ Franklyn Griffiths is a 2008-2009 CIC Senior Research Fellow and Professor Emeritus of Political Science and George Ignatieff Chair Emeritus of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Toronto.



1. THE ARCTIC AS AN ARENA

In discussions about the Arctic it is sometimes asked why not follow the Antarctic pattern in regulating the affairs of the north polar region.² This is a natural suggestion perhaps, but not one that can be acted upon. In thinking about the Arctic as a setting for Canadian intervention it may therefore be useful to begin with a contrast. As polar areas, the Antarctic and the Arctic do share very similar physical conditions and present similar challenges for human understanding, occupancy and use. And yet they could not be further apart. Antarctica, a continent unto itself, is governed by treaty (1959) which puts all territorial claims into abeyance, demilitarizes the region, bars resource development and enjoins the parties to scientific and, later, environmental cooperation. The Arctic, however, is a polar Mediterranean. Surrounded by the territories of five coastal states – Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States – and those of three other states at a remove from the Arctic Ocean – Finland, Iceland and Sweden – international governance is minimal here. It is also difficult to compare the Arctic with the Antarctic because the former is the scene of enduring human habitation, incomparably so in the case of indigenous peoples; strategic military activity, nuclear deployments included; steadily more intensive resource exploitation and scientific research; largely dormant but potentially severe jurisdictional disputes; and minimal environmental cooperation. Furthermore, while it is easy to determine where the Antarctic begins and ends, the Arctic according to certain definitions extends well beyond the Ocean and the Arctic Circle to include all lands above the tree line in the eight regional countries, and waters down to the 10°C isotherm for the month of July. As such, it includes treeless Iceland, the Labrador Sea, the Aleutian Islands and the entire Bering Sea. Farflung, the Arctic amounts to some 8 percent of the Earth's surface. Compared to all of this, Antarctica is a tight little island. No way, therefore, can we expect to follow the Antarctic precedent and come up with an omnibus treaty for the Arctic any time soon. Instead, we are faced with the difficult task of building habits and structures of cooperation as circumstance allows in the decades ahead.

Cooperation is achieved in many ways. It may come opportunistically, which is to say in joint action on projects that seem most timely and achievable, on whatever the convergence of national interests may allow at a particular moment. In the Arctic, opportunism favours bilateral and issue-specific collaboration such as that between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea area, or among the parties to the Polar Bear Treaty of 1973.³ Arrangements such as these are certainly to be greeted. Indeed, in the Barents sub-region

² This paper is based on personal experience as an observer of Arctic international relations, interviews with officials and others in Ottawa and abroad and principally on thought about the policy problems encountered. Excellent introductions to Arctic affairs are to be had in the Arctic Human Development Report, and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. See: *AHDR (Arctic Human Development Report) 2004*. (Akureyri, Iceland: Steffanson Arctic Institute, 2004). Accessed 28 February 2009, http://www.svs.is/AHDR/AHDR%20chapters/English%20version/AHDR_first%2012pages.pdf; and ACIA (Arctic Climate Impact Assessment). *Impacts of a Warming Arctic*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Our present observations of Canadian policy and Arctic international relations stem from Franklyn Griffiths, "A Northern Foreign Policy," *Wellesley Paper 7*. (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1979); and Franklyn Griffiths, "Introduction: The Arctic as an International Political Region," in *The Arctic Challenge: Nordic and Canadian Approaches to Security and Cooperation in an Emerging International Region*. edited by Kari Möttölä. (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1988): 1-14. We benefitted greatly from conversations with private analysts as well as officials in Ottawa (23-25 June, 21-23 July, 22-23 October and 10 November 2008), New York (2-3 June 2008), Washington, DC (7-11 July 2008) and Oslo (6-10 October 2008). As well, over the last year or so we were fortunate to attend a series of international conferences on Arctic affairs, especially in Iceland (30 January 2009) and Berlin (11-13 March 2009). The latter, a gathering on "New Chances and New Responsibilities in the Arctic Region" was on the invitation of the German Federal Foreign Office and provided an opportunity to test certain proposals.

³ In parallel with the growth of Norwegian-Russian cooperation in the area, collaboration in the Barents region has expanded with the creation of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region or BEAR (1993) and, subsequently, its inclusion of high northern Swedish and Finnish counties together with Russian republics (Karelian and Komi) and the Nenets region to the east in Archangel province. Furthermore, the Northern Dimension of the European Union has also brought European interests into the interplay. BEAR is one of the key institutions examined in *International Cooperation and Arctic Governance: Regime effectiveness and northern region building*. edited by Olav Schram Stokke and Geir Hønneland. (London: Routledge, 2007). See also Stokke, "Sub-regional cooperation and protection of the Arctic marine environment in the Barents Sea," in *Protecting the polar marine environment: law and policy for pollution prevention*. Edited by Davor Vidas. (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2000). Chapter 6. On the Polar Bear treaty, see Anne Fikkan et al., "Polar Bears: The importance of simplicity," in *Polar Politics: Creating International Regimes*. edited by Oran R. Young and Gail Osherenko. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993): 96-151.

international cooperation is more extensive and impressive than anywhere else in the Arctic. Nor is there anything like an equivalent practice at the regional level. If the Arctic states confined themselves to sub-regional opportunities, cooperation would surely proceed. But it would not be greatly cumulative, integrated or conducive to the growth of a sense of shared purpose. Instead, the collective ability to accomplish would likely be held to "fragmented incrementalism."⁴

Alternatively, and this is something that has yet to be tried in earnest, the Eight could *also* adopt a multilateral and region-wide approach to Arctic affairs. As well as picking up on opportunities as they arise, the ice states would orchestrate joint action so as to shape the development of the region according to a common strategic design. They would act not so much on what might seem currently doable – international provisions for search and rescue, oil-spill response, the establishment of maritime and terrestrial protected areas and the like – but also on what is needed to create and maintain a region that is maximally consistent with the national purpose and the long view. The opportunistic and the incremental should not be walled off from the regional and the strategic in a collaborative approach to an awakening Arctic. Quite the reverse, sub-regional collaboration, even bilateral collaboration as for example between Canada and the United States in mapping North America's Arctic continental shelf,⁵ is to be valued and encouraged not only in its own right but also as it may contribute to the betterment of regional conditions. Still, it is the regional and strategic dimension that is underrepresented in Arctic practice and will be emphasized here.

What we have in mind is a *via media* for the practice of Arctic cooperation – an alternative to treaty-based mandatory compliance and the fragmented incrementalism that now prevails. Another way would see the Arctic equipped with new capacities for voluntary coordination of, and active support for, international cooperation, be it bilateral, sub-regional, region-wide or extra-regional in scope. The essential requirement is an enabling central institution of governance, one that reviews and coordinates cooperation on a consensual basis while also providing financial assistance to projects in need.⁶ This paper envisages a forum that serves a diversity of processes and institutions chosen or set up pragmatically to meet problems of collective action as they arise. At times providing the locus for collaboration among all Eight, such a forum would more likely greet, comment upon, observe, support and receive the results of varied undertakings led by subsets of the Eight acting, more often than not, in conjunction with non-Arctic actors. Short of binding regulation, it could also monitor and report on voluntary compliance with agreed guidelines, for example on oil and gas development in the region. As well and as a counter to the fragmentation of today, it would have the big picture in mind.

International self-regulation in the Arctic should not take the form of a series of pick-up hockey games that have no relation to one another – on fisheries management, safe and efficient navigation in ice-covered waters, abatement of land-based sources of marine pollution, conservation of marine biological diversity and so on. On the contrary and under the auspices of a central institution with modest means of its own,

⁴ The phrase is from David VanderZwaag, "Land-based marine pollution and the Arctic: polarities between principles and practice," in *Protecting the polar marine environment: law and policy for pollution prevention*, edited by Davor Vidas. 197.

⁵ Norval Scott. "U.S., Canada to chart path for Arctic future," *Globe and Mail*. (2 July 2008). A7.

⁶ Our thinking is not far removed from that of Professor Oran Young of the University of California at Santa Barbara and Ambassador Hans Corell, former Legal Counsel to the United Nations. See Oran R. Young, "Arctic Governance: The Next Phase." Paper commissioned by the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. (June 2002). Accessed 26 February 2009, http://www.arcticparl.org/_res/site/File/static/conf5_spar2002.pdf; Hans Corell. "Reflections on the possibilities and limitations of a binding legal regime for the Arctic." Address to the seventh conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. (3 August 2006). Accessed 28 February 2009, <http://www.havc.se>; Oran Young, "Whither the Arctic? Conflict or cooperation in the circumpolar North," *Polar Record*. Vol. 45 No. 1 (2009): 73-82; and Hans Corell. "Mounting Tensions and Melting Ice: Exploring the Legal and Political Future of the Arctic." Address of 6 February 2009 at a symposium of the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law. Accessed 28 February 2009, <http://www.havc.se>.

regime building would be open to overarching coordination that takes advantage of complementarities and avoids incompatible outcomes. Net effect: cooperation that is not only less fragmented, less sluggishly incremental and more conducive to a sense of shared purpose for the Arctic as a region, but also respectful of sovereignty. The basis for such an institution already exists in the Arctic Council, about which we will have more to say as we go along, including on the matter of a new fund for the support of international cooperation. And yet regional practice is not common practice in the Arctic at present. This is a fact. Before considering how and why it is so and what it means for a Canadian Arctic strategy, we should make clear the chief benefit of international cooperation that is more decidedly regional.

There would of course be no need for regional stewardship if the Eight were individually able to achieve their Arctic environmental and social objectives on their own at acceptable cost. But no Arctic sovereign is omnipotent in its own space and its immediate surround. National action is insufficient when each depends in greater or lesser measure on the other, for example in maintaining secure sea lanes of communication for navigation to and from Arctic natural-resource sites, or for safe and efficient inter-continental shipping. Nor is a sub-regional approach of great use in this kind of thing. And then there is the fact that the sovereign's holdings are subject to trans-boundary processes everywhere in the Arctic, be it with migratory fish stocks, land-based sources of environmental pollution, long range air-borne transport of toxins, with the preservation of biological diversity and so on. Pervasive challenges such as these do not readily yield to unilateral or sub-regional action.

If the sovereign is not merely to possess but to enjoy the benefits of their jurisdiction, he or she will join with others in a practice of stewardship. By this we mean *locally informed governance that not only polices but also shows respect and care for the natural environment and living things in it*. Valuing the Arctic environment and the life it supports in their own right and not primarily as means to be exploited for human advantage, the ideal sovereign will be doubly embedded in nature and in the society of locals who are most familiar with on-site conditions. Fully alert to trans-boundary effects, the sovereign will not rely primarily on self-help. Instead, he or she will collaborate. Whether or not the ideal is attained any time soon, the knowing sovereign will act as a cooperative steward in seeking to maintain not only a local milieu conducive to possession in full, but also regional and global conditions favourable to human existence in an era of rapid climate change. In short, the Arctic state needs considerably more than surety of autonomous possession. In a world of physical and human interdependence, it must also have favourable conditions of existence. The best way to them is through a regional practice of cooperative stewardship.

The thought of affirming Arctic sovereignty by means of joint stewardship activity on a regional basis is unconventional. Although they vary in this, the Eight are not inclined to see far beyond the horizon of sovereign possession and exclusive jurisdiction. The reasons are complex. In surveying them we begin to uncover the essentials of what a Canadian Arctic strategy will have to accomplish in generating and deploying new means on behalf of cooperative stewardship at the regional level. The situation is in fact a difficult one. We need to be realistic about it while also acknowledging the potential as well as the need for change. The fundamentals can be discussed under five main headings.⁷

First of all, the Arctic areas of the ice states and, even more so, the high polar region that lies beyond national frontiers, are *peripheral* to the life of southern majorities and the agendas of their governments – less peripheral for some of the Eight, but peripheral on the whole. To be specific, issues related to the

⁷ Here we enlarge upon "The Long-Term Need for an Arctic Council," an Annex we provided for the Arctic Council Panel in its report, *To Establish an International Arctic Council: A Framework Report*. (Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1991).

boundaries and the immediate surround of individual Arctic countries may be regarded with utmost gravity. But the region as a whole is something different. In its entirety the Arctic is populated by only some four million persons, roughly half of whom are to be found in the Russian Federation. The American state of Alaska has a population of approximately 650,000 of whom perhaps one-fifth are indigenous.⁸ The Canadian Arctic – vast enough for the entirety of Europe from the Bosphorus to the English Channel to be fitted into Nunavut alone – has a population of some 130,000 of whom half are indigenous. Overall, the demographics are such that there is not a lot of the national vote in the Arctic, not a lot of knowledge of or resonance with the region down south (though nationalist identifications with the north may sell well politically in Canada and Russia) and a predisposition to focus on resource development and environmental protection rather than the human dimension of Arctic affairs.⁹ All the while, it is very expensive to venture much in the remote and difficult physical conditions of the region. Several implications follow.

As southern interest grows, attention is focused on the national domain and resource exploitation right out to the farthest edge of jurisdiction. Assured possession, which is to say sovereignty, becomes the natural point of departure in southern considerations of the national purpose in the Arctic. Just what northern residents might have in mind for their locales and for the region as a whole is marginalized. At the same time, whereas national pronouncements in favour of environmental protection, sustainable development and international action for both are readily produced, the lack of substantial domestic coalitions for effective, and therefore costly, international Arctic cooperation make it exceedingly difficult to coordinate and regulate national resource development in the region according to enforceable rules. Arctic policies, national and international, acquire an official and bureaucratic character. They depend heavily on what middle-level officials can cobble together from existing mandates and already-available resources. As long as the Arctic, over and above its sub-regions, continues to be of marginal political interest down south, even the most skilled civil servants and non-governmental organizations will continue to find that ingeniously negotiated deliverables for regional cooperation are met with little interest from senior authorities and their political masters. Not only the deliverables, but also the very appetite for them has to be created.

Second, the Arctic is *pacific* in the sense that not a lot is going on as compared to other regions of the world. This aspect of the situation is unevenly experienced. For some, in Norway and Russia for example, the felt sense of danger may be strong enough to deny any thought of the pacific. Still, we should note that religious and ideological clashes are not to be found in the Arctic and seem unlikely to arise any time soon. The same applies to terrorists, either home-grown or introduced from afar. While great physical violence is being done to the natural world, it is wholly absent in the way governments and peoples deal with one another within and between the region's nations unless we include human suffering from indifference and neglect as experienced violence. Nor is there any real expectation of war among the ice states as a result of conflict originating within the region. Indeed, when we look at the map and consider the full extent of settled and law-governed extensions of national jurisdiction, the Arctic is largely bereft of a physical basis for international violence as long as states refrain from trespassing upon or invading one another's established rights. By the same token, international cooperation is made difficult when most of the region is under firm national control.

⁸ Population numbers are from Oran R. Young and Neils Einarsson. "Introduction: Human Development in the Arctic," in *AHDR (Arctic Human Development Report) 2004*. (Akureyri, Iceland: Steffanson Arctic Institute, 2004): 17-19.

⁹ For Russian identifications, see: Franklyn Griffiths. "The Arctic in the Russian Identity," in *The Soviet Maritime Arctic*. edited by Lawson W. Brigham. (London: Belhaven Press, 1991): 83-107. As to the Canadian identity, see: Franklyn Griffiths. "The shipping news: Canada's Arctic sovereignty not on thinning ice," *International Journal*. Vol. 58 No. 2 (Spring 2003): esp. 273-275.

When trouble arises it is between contiguous states that may not welcome either the intervention of remote others or the application of generic regional principles. Meanwhile, we observe increases in tourism and low levels of military preparedness. There were also increases in resource exploitation as recently as 2008. All along, physical communication throughout the Arctic remains heavily oriented along north-south and not east-west lines. The exchange of people, goods and to a lesser extent ideas across the region is stunted. Canada's 2008 "Global Commerce Strategy," for example, lists 13 priority areas and the Arctic is not among them.¹⁰ This is by no means to imply the need to create an integrated economic region in the Arctic. But it underlines the larger point that not a lot is going on in this part of the world when it is seen from a southern point of view. The thought of understanding and acting upon the region in the round is evidently one whose time has yet to come.

A pacific Arctic presents us all with pluses and minuses. On the negative side, the region is not merely a hinterland that is peripheral to the national purpose, but inherently something of a backwater. As compared with what might be done in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, or the Asia-Pacific region, new international engagements in the Arctic are difficult to justify. The stakes have not been there for commitments that cost money: if it ain't broke why fix it? Where is the urgency that is required to command the attention of very busy people? At the same time, and surely this is the main point, a pacific Arctic is to be prized and built upon. How this might be accomplished is central to a regional strategy. For now we may note that thus far the international agenda of a peaceable if peripheral Arctic has focused on the management of resources in whose exploitation all the region's states and peoples are interconnected. It is concerned with climate change, human development, long range transport of pollutants, marine transportation, conduct of scientific research, maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity and so on. The single word for this kind of thing is, again, stewardship. Very much to be desired in its own right, an international Arctic practice of stewardship also deserves to be intensified as a means of building ever denser webs of cooperation among the Eight – webs of common interest to constrain the enduring propensity of states to enter into conflict. Unfortunately, the propensity for conflict is reinforced by a third feature of the region.

When it comes to climate and weather, the Arctic is without doubt a major influence on global affairs. Even in this domain, however, the region is increasingly *dependent* on processes and events in the world outside. This is our third fundamental. Greenhouse gas emissions originating in the Arctic itself account for but little of the ice and snow-cover reduction of recent decades. The same applies to patterns of boom and bust in Arctic oil and gas development, to unsettling short term variations in global energy demand and prices, and to the vagaries of the global business cycle such as we are experiencing in 2009. Pollutants – DDT for example – originate in and are transported to the Canadian Arctic from as far away as sub-Saharan Africa, making it impossible to address the problem effectively in Arctic forums.¹¹ In its priorities and practices, science performed in the Arctic is decidedly global and not regional. Much the same may be said of Arctic interstate collaboration, which itself is heavily dependent on extra-regional variables. This was certainly the case during the Cold War, when the very thought of pan-Arctic cooperation was effectively banished by the demands of a military-political confrontation whose origins had nothing to do with the region as such.¹² Today, the sequence of action and reaction between Russia and the Western

¹⁰ Government of Canada. *Seizing Global Advantage: A Global Commerce Strategy for Securing Canada's Growth & Prosperity*. (Ottawa: Public Works, 2008).

¹¹ *Northern Lights against POPS: Combating Toxic Threats in the Arctic*. edited by David L. Downie and Terry Fenge. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

¹² The story is well told by Willy Østreng in "National Security and the Evolving Issues of Arctic Environment and Cooperation," in *National Security and International Environmental Cooperation in the Arctic – The Case of the Northern Sea Route*. edited by Willy Østreng. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999). Chapter 1.

countries that followed the Russian-Georgian crisis is not forgotten. It makes for mistrust on both sides and, in the case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) it prompts former Soviet members of the alliance to seek a role for the organization in the Arctic.¹³ The region does have the potential for one state to apply international sanctions against another in direct response either to enormities committed elsewhere, or simply in response to others' sanctions themselves. It therefore needs to be shielded against extra-regional conflict. The alternative: Arctic cooperation more likely unravelled.

Arctic strategy aimed at enhanced cooperation will surely fall short of intent if it is confined to collective action by regional states on issues specific to the region. Instead, regional objectives and global strategy must be integrated. On the one hand, this means acting on the novel proposition that Arctic collaboration is capable of making a global contribution. For example, an increasingly successful practice of cooperative stewardship in the Arctic – one in which states and corporations bring one another to conform to regional standards of best practice, for example in their regional resource extraction operations – could set new global performance standards that demonstrate not only what to do but how to get it done. As well, the more Arctic states are encultured in stewardship, the more likely they are to contribute globally to environmental and climate protection. On the other hand, and in regard to Arctic requirements that need global action, we need consider only the example of anti-satellite weapons. Now that Canada has reaffirmed national control over Radarsat-2 and done so in large part to ensure Arctic surveillance, Ottawa has new reason to join with others in extra-regional negotiations to constrain and ultimately ban anti-satellite attack technology (ASAT) capabilities including those based in space.¹⁴ Global arms-control and confidence-building measures may thus serve not only the national purpose writ large but the aims of regional strategy as well. Done right, the Arctic and the global fuse. Done wrong, the Arctic is a place apart.

Fourth, the Arctic is physically and politically *fragmented*. To the extent that cooperation among the ice states adds up to no more than fragmented incrementalism, we have here a major part of the reason why. The actors who determine the affairs of the region differ, sometimes strongly, in their material interests, political preferences and in their rights and abilities to speak to the issues. Commonalities are of course to be found. Given similar and very demanding living conditions, Arctic residents may have more in common with their counterparts in other countries of the region than they do with fellow nationals to the south. The same applies to small communities and municipal and territorial governments, the latter gathered in the Northern Forum.¹⁵ And down south as well, there are shared views that reach right around the region. Nobody speaks in favour of war or a remilitarization of the Arctic. All countries are prepared to address the linkages between development and the environment in the region's affairs. And yet, even in such matters biases and the aversions of some to the thinking and practices of others are also shared.

Geography obviously separates the Arctic Eight from non-Arctic states and from intergovernmental entities such as the European Union (EU) and, increasingly, NATO, which have shown greater interest in the region. Reading between the lines, we may suggest that the Eight are inclined to resist outside involvement in what they take to be their own affairs – and rightly so from our point of view in that stewardship is a

¹³ Observations to this effect were heard in Reykjavik on 30 January 2009 at an international conference that we attended following a seminar organized by NATO and the Government of Iceland on "Security Prospects in the High North."

¹⁴ On Radarsat, see Paul Taylor. "A hawk-eyed addition to Canada's Arctic arsenal," *Globe and Mail*. (10 December 2007). A7. On Chinese and Russian antipathy to space weaponization, see Pavel Podvig and Hui Zhang. *Russian and Chinese Responses to U.S. Military Plans in Space*. (Cambridge MASS: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2008).

¹⁵ Established in 1991, the Northern Forum brings together subnational and regional governments from the eight northern countries and others as well. Their website is www.northernforum.org.

matter of locally informed governance. Among the Eight, however, geography also divides the Ocean Five from the Non-littoral Three. In May 2008, the Five coastal states (again, Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States) met at Ilulissat, Greenland, without either the Three non-littorals (Finland, Iceland and Sweden) or the representatives of Arctic indigenous peoples. Concerned to affirm the role of the law of the sea in the resolution of competing claims to the outer continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean, they also sought to counter non-Arctic proposals to create new regional governance arrangements and otherwise to enter more directly into the determination of Arctic affairs. They produced an admirable statement of common purpose, the "Ilulissat Declaration," which, however, lent itself to interpretation as an act of exclusion.¹⁶ Indeed, in meeting and pronouncing as they did, the Five excluded the Three as well as the region's indigenous peoples' organizations. In meeting separately they also opened themselves to interpretation as signalling a desire to avoid greater reliance upon the Arctic Council as an institution for regional governance. As well, the four NATO members (Canada, Denmark, Norway, and the United States) of the Five could be viewed as excluding non-Arctic members of the alliance in a "regionalization" of the organization.¹⁷ Geography thus combines with low-key power politics to produce a set of concentric circles in which a widening array of players now vies for position and influence.

Maneuvering of this kind favours not so much a regional but a sub-regional approach to governance in which each of the Five concentrates on the national domain and adjacent areas in pursuit of natural resources and without as yet a compelling concern for trans-boundary effects. To the extent that this is the prevailing practice, as indeed it seems to be, the Arctic is best viewed as a collection of sub-regions. To the Barents and Bering sub-regions, which have already been mentioned, we could add a North American equivalent that might one day see significant interaction between Canada, Denmark/Greenland and the United States. And then on the Eurasian side the Russian vastness presents not a single sub-region but a set of them. Ranging all the way from the Northwest to Chukotka, Russia's Arctic areas are divided for administrative purposes into the profitable and unprofitable – those endowed with oil, natural gas and minerals on the one hand, and then those without economic prospects and from which non-indigenous residents are urged to emigrate.¹⁸ Meanwhile, seaward of the exclusive economic zones of the Five, there is a high-seas sub-region that is sure to be transformed as the waters warm. Variety in the extent and intensity of human occupancy from one area to another in the region is accompanied by considerable unevenness in the readiness of Arctic states to collaborate even at the sub-regional level. And then we have a fundamental difference between the Russian Federation and the other members of the Eight.

Russia, as noted, is not counterposed to the Western states when it comes to governance of the region. On the contrary, it is a member of the innermost circle and thus champions the rule of law in Arctic international relations. To be sure, Moscow is capable of antagonistic behaviour as it reacts to perceived attempts

¹⁶ "The Ilulissat Declaration. Arctic Ocean Conference." (Ilulissat, Greenland, 27-29 May 2008). Accessed 27 February 2009, http://oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Ilulissat_Declaration.pdf As to exclusion, the European Commission felt it necessary by November 2008 to say that, "The EU should promote broad dialogue and negotiated solutions and not support arrangements which exclude any Arctic EU Member States or Arctic EEA EFTA countries." See: Commission of the European Communities. "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The European Union and the Arctic regions." Brussels, COM (2008) 763, section 4. Accessed 28 February 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/arctic_region/docs/com_08_763_en.pdf.

¹⁷ "Chairman's Conclusions." Seminar on Security Prospects in the High North. 29 January 2009. Sponsored by NATO and the Government of Iceland. The concluding statement has not so far as we know been published. For the seminar, accessed 27 February 2009, www.nato.int/docu/update/2009/01-january/e0128a.html.

¹⁸ Helge Blakkisrud. "What's to be done with the North?" in *Tackling Space: Federal Politics and the Russian North*. edited by Blakkisrud and Geir Hønneland. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006): 37-40.

to neutralize its military power and to encroach upon what it takes to be its sphere of influence. It is thus able to bring on heightened threat assessments and defensive reactions from the West, as for example in response to renewed Russian strategic bomber exercises in the region.¹⁹ But these processes are, we believe, manageable. The real problem in the relationship between Russia and the other members of the Eight owes more to culture and history than to geography and politics. It centers on the fact that as compared with the Western nations of the region, which are certainly not without fault, Russia is in a class by itself when it comes to Arctic environmental protection.²⁰ Sadly, the Arctic environmental backwardness of the Russian Federation exemplifies what a practice of cooperative stewardship would overcome.

Immensely strengthened by its oil and natural gas as long as demand and prices held, Russia continues to act on an Arctic agenda of sovereignty and security that is focused on resource exploitation. Such is the gist of Moscow's recent policy statement on the region, which centres on the delimitation and securing of a national "zone" that extends well out into the Arctic Ocean.²¹ Averse to multilateral regulatory arrangements, Russia prefers national implementation of international legal obligations. Nor does concern for pollution figure prominently in either Russia's domestic or international Arctic operations. How else could it be in a country that dumped used nuclear reactors into Arctic waters not so long ago, whose environmental awareness has yet to make much headway against the industrial imperative?²² Money and mandate wanting, the Russian Foreign Ministry itself has had difficulty in securing the participation of other government departments in Arctic Council working groups. No surprise, therefore, that Russian contributions to the work of the Council have been scattered, ineffectual, and in need of subsidy by other states including for representation by officials.²³

Russia's presence in the region is so large that effective pan-Arctic stewardship of oil and gas exploitation, marine transportation, land-based sources of oceanic pollution and the like is impossible without it. The Russian Federation must therefore be encouraged to come forward as an environmentally responsible Arctic partner. What is needed is an end to the neglect and disarray that typically occur when the central administration is not paying close attention. The question is how to secure Moscow's attention. The size of the problem ensures that the United States will be heavily involved in the solution.

Actually, whereas the Russian Federation has largely been absent from the work of the Arctic Council, the United States has led in collaborative research but otherwise has chosen not to favour task

¹⁹ See, for example: Rowan Scarborough. "Russian flights smack of Cold War," *Washington Post*. (26 June 2008) and Steven Chase. "Ottawa rebukes Russia for military flights in the Arctic," *Globe and Mail*. (28 February 2009). A4. In the latter piece, the NORAD Commander is quoted as saying, "The Russians have conducted themselves professionally; they have maintained compliance with international rules of airspace sovereignty and have not entered the internal airspace of either of the countries."

²⁰ Geir Hønneland and Jørgen Holten Jørgensen. "The Ups and Downs of Environmental Governance." in Blakissrud and Hønneland, *Tackling Space*. Chapter 7. See also: Jonathan D. Oldfield. *Russian Nature: Exploring the Environmental Consequences of Societal Change*. (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2005).

²¹ Russian Federation. Security Council. "Press-reliz po Osnovam gosudarstvennoi politiki Rossiskoi Federatsii v Arktike na period do 2020 goda i dalneishuyu perspektivy" [Press Release on the Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period to 2020 and Beyond], *Novosti*, 27 March 2009. Accessed 30 March 2009 at <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/news/421.html> An unofficial translation of the full statement is available at "Google Translations."

²² On nuclear dumping, see: Olav Schram Stokke. "Radioactive waste in the Barents and Kara Seas: Russian implementation of the global dumping regime," in *Protecting the polar marine environment: law and policy for pollution prevention*. Edited by Davor Vidas. (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2000). Chapter 9.

²³ Private communications including from Senior Arctic Officials. See also the insightful discussion in Elana Wilson Rowe. "Russian Multilateralism: The Case of the Arctic Council," in *The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy*. edited by Rowe and Stina Torjesen. (London: Routledge, 2009). Chapter 9.

expansion.²⁴ Even back in the Clinton years, when the Arctic Council was being established, Washington stood out in its effort to circumscribe the mandate and capabilities of the new regional forum. One reason is that outside of the scientific community and the state of Alaska, there has really been no coalition for national, much less international, action in the Arctic.²⁵ To be sure, the US Navy is perennially interested in maritime mobility, but otherwise nobody has wanted to do much beyond study and learn in the region until recently. Still, whereas Russia is deeply constrained from environmental protection, the United States has the capacity to surge forward as a regional leader on this issue. Indeed, the Obama Administration's acute interest in climate change could well surface in new US Arctic initiatives. The challenge for Canada is to find a way to engage both the Russian Federation and the United States on behalf of a common design for the region.

Finally, and it follows from what has just been said, the Arctic is *not well set up*, which is to say under-institutionalized when it comes to international cooperation. Although other regional and sub-regional entities exist, the Arctic Council is the central forum for pan-Arctic collaboration.²⁶ Established on Canadian initiative in 1996, after the end of the Cold War and before the recent rise in the geostrategic significance of the region, the Council has risked being left behind in an Arctic that demanded more joint action as well as self-help from each of the regional states if they, too, were not to be left behind. But cooperation has not been forthcoming. Things have now got to the point where some deride the Council as an ineffective talk shop far removed from policy and the real needs of the region.²⁷ Though the Council does well and sometimes outstandingly well at monitoring and assessment – think of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment – the Eight need to move beyond joint observation and statements of good intention. They need to endow the Council with new resolve and new money to help coordinate not only national activity but regional and sub-regional cooperation and to do so on a voluntary basis until the day comes when, issue by issue, compliance with agreed principles and rules becomes mandatory. But how to begin when, even to the attentive Canadian public, the Arctic Council is all but totally unknown?

Drawing together the strands of this assessment of the Arctic as an international political region, we have to acknowledge that there is really not a lot of sub-regional and even less region-wide interaction among the Eight at present. When it comes to politics, the Arctic as an arena is very largely empty. A scattering of residents, especially indigenous peoples, is to be seen in the front rows. Otherwise, there is still hardly anyone in the stands even as global warming becomes something of a draw for southerners. Out on the ice, a few players are scrambling for a puck in the Barents sub-region. Some are also to be seen in and around the Bering Sea. Otherwise, individuals are standing about, leaning on their sticks. There is a cluster in the Arctic Council, but they are sitting on the boards. Intent on observing the ice conditions, which they do very

²⁴ According to the US Arctic policy directive of 9 January 2009, the Arctic Council "[...] should remain a high-level forum devoted to issues within its current mandate and not be transformed into a formal international organization, particularly one with assessed contributions. The United States is nevertheless open to updating the structure of the Council [...]." See White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "National Security Presidential Directive NSPD 66: Arctic Region Policy." (12 January 2009). Accessed 27 February 2009, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-66.htm>.

²⁵ Franklyn Griffiths. "Environment in the U.S. Discourse on Security: The Case of the Missing Arctic Waters." in *National Security and International Environmental Cooperation in the Arctic*. edited by Willy Østrem. Chapter 5. In fairness, as the member of the Arctic Five that is least aware of itself as an Arctic country and least troubled by threats to Arctic sovereignty, the United States has the greatest potential to take the regional view in acting for cooperative stewardship as well as assured sovereign possession.

²⁶ For detail on the Council see <http://www.arctic-council.org> accessed 28 February 2009. There is also a growing literature on the Arctic Council. Best see: Timo Koivurova and David L. VanderZwaag. "The Arctic Council at 10 Years: Retrospect and Prospects," *U.B.C. Law Review*. Vol. 40 no. 1 (May 2007): 121-194. Also, in regard to regime- and region-building, see: *International Cooperation and Arctic Governance: Regime Effectiveness and Northern Region Building*. edited by Olav Schram Stokke and Geir Hønneland. (London: Routledge, 2007). And: E.C.H. Keskitalo. *Negotiating the Arctic: Construction of an International Region*. (London: Routledge, 2004).

²⁷ Oran Young, "Whither the Arctic? Conflict or cooperation in the circumpolar North."

well, they have yet to get into a game. The governments of the Five are on their benches – Russia alone on one side of the arena and rest spread out along the other. As to the remaining Three, it is unclear, after the Ilulissat Declaration, whether they are emerging from or returning to the locker rooms. Heavily preoccupied with other things, the Five do not often look in the direction of centre ice. When they do, they tend to the piece right in front of them, to their own holdings.

In the Arctic, possession goals trump milieu goals aimed at shaping conditions beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.²⁸ As long as the national and at most a sub-regional perspective are predominant, pan-Arctic interplay will be wanting. The Arctic will remain only minimally an international political region. The opportunity to collaborate will continue to be circumscribed. The potential for conflict and for continued environmental degradation will be left to look after itself. To reduce our exposure to conflict and to ensure appropriate care for Arctic ecosystems in the next go-around of development and thereafter, we are in need of a strategy. It should tell us not so much what we as Canadians need to do on the issues, but how we might lead in the creation of new abilities to achieve shared purposes including defence of sovereignty in conditions of interdependence. Stronger governance for cooperative stewardship will be at the heart of a Canadian endeavor to shape the future of the Arctic region.

2. ARCTIC STRATEGY FOR CANADA

A new Canadian effort for stewardship and sovereignty in the Arctic will be governed by three main objectives. Emerging directly from the situation we face, they are interrelated and will take time to realize.

The first is to elevate the conduct of Arctic international relations to the highest political level in dealings among the regional states, and also between Arctic heads of state and those of interested non-Arctic countries. Acting accordingly, Canada would aim to energize the region's affairs by associating them with the global as well as the domestic priorities of the Eight. Arctic international relations would owe less to the internal agendas of the Eight and more to their global policy imperatives. As well, we would give voice to and seek greater recognition of the needs of the Arctic both globally and in the metropolitan centers of the Arctic countries themselves. And if we are to raise Arctic international dealings from the official to the highest political level, the Prime Minister will of necessity have the lead in Canada.

Our second objective will be to engage the Russian Federation on behalf of a larger collective commitment to cooperative stewardship. United States involvement at the highest level is essential here. Our governing purpose in speaking to Washington and Moscow would be to achieve broader and deeper pan-Arctic collaboration by bringing international partnership support to bear on precisely those sub-regions most in need of assistance, namely some in the Russian Federation. Russia's leaders would be invited to accept a new opportunity to channel the region's evolution for the common good. Specifically, they would be asked to act on the proposition that Arctic political development presents us all with a choice between, on the one hand, enhanced regional security and intensified international Arctic assistance including new funds for cooperative stewardship, and, on the other, the risk of growing discord, increased potential for NATO involvement and diminished common security in the region.

²⁸ The distinction between possession and milieu goals is introduced in Arnold Wolfers. *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962). Chapter 5.

Third, we would strive to invigorate the Arctic Council and its ability to coordinate and support regional and sub-regional stewardship projects among Arctic states, and also between them and non-Arctic states and other entities and processes such as the International Maritime Organization and the 1992 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR).²⁹ The Council would not itself do the work of stewardship as for example in the regulation of maritime tourism, the management of new fisheries or in the implementation of region-wide adaptive responses to climate change. It would nevertheless be strengthened as a coordinating and funding center for stewardship operations including those aimed at partnership with the Russian Federation. To this end, Canada would seek acceptance of Arctic Council enlargement to include direct participation by non-Arctic countries as consultative parties in an arrangement that was without prejudice to the sovereignty of the Eight and which also produced new funds for cooperative stewardship.

Additional objectives related to Canada's bilateral relations with the United States and non-Arctic countries are also to be considered. Still, the core of an Arctic strategy resides in the triad of *elevation, engagement and invigoration* – elevation to the highest political level, engagement of the United States and the Russian Federation in the first instance and invigoration of the Arctic Council as a forum for the coordination and support of collective action.

For starters, a Canadian effort for improved pan-Arctic governance will not go far without new intellectual and policy capital at the disposal of the Prime Minister of Canada. A bit further on we will consider northern aspects of the domestic political situation in this country and why it should fall to the Prime Minister to take personal responsibility in the framing and execution of a Canadian Arctic strategy. Let us say for now that no one else is up to the task, which nevertheless happens to offer potential political advantages as a new national project. Otherwise, leadership from the highest level is a precondition for success in engaging the Russian Federation in the steward's role, as surely it is for more active U S regional involvement as well. In the latter case, the opportunity to make use of Arctic relationships in furthering US global interests could prove to be compelling, especially when allied with the need to offer global leadership in the face of accelerating climate change in the Arctic. Analogous opportunities for personal diplomacy could arise between the Canadian Prime Minister and the heads of other Arctic states, and also non-Arctic states with interests in the region, China and Germany for example. Accordingly, we suggest that the Prime Minister start off with a personal effort to gain insight into Arctic affairs.

Just as the Arctic is new to most Canadians, so also is the thinking about it that is already out there in each of the region's countries. There are resources here for all who would build a community of competence in Arctic stewardship, who would find and then give voice to an Arctic identity in national policy debate and in global policy discourse bearing upon the region. With such ends in mind, the Prime Minister ought to convene a one- or two-day symposium of eminent Arctic persons at a location in Canada. Such an occasion would be strictly a means for personal learning on the part of the Prime Minister and some of his entourage. It would have no international standing. From each of the region's countries it could bring together a northern indigenous leader, an outstanding southerner in the arts or literature and another southerner knowledgeable in matters of Arctic-related political practice. Or more simply it could draw together some of the foremost writers from around the region. Called perhaps the *Arctic Identity Network*, a gathering such as this ought to generate a new awareness of values, aspirations, purposes and practices

²⁹ The OSPAR Convention of 1992 gathers 15 European states and the European Commission in a common effort to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic, whose northern region is taken to include Arctic waters reaching to the North Pole. See <http://www.ospar.org>, accessed 28 February 2009.

common to the region. Given a rapporteur and reconvened as required, it should impart to the Prime Minister and some in his Office (PMO) a sense of direction for the region in an era of physical transformation and renewed resource development activity. It should also alert policy-makers to differences in the way Arctic countries approach similar problems.³⁰

Whether or not it was called "cooperative stewardship," an equivalent conception would surely emerge as a prime concern in the Network's exchanges. So also would an interest in the ethical and moral dimension of human actions including respect for the natural environment in its own right. Ensuing Canadian government activity in the region would more likely be grounded in an understanding of the prerequisites of cooperation that extend well beyond the material and financial considerations that predominate when the capacity to act is assumed. The Prime Minister would take the initiative personally in order to make clear from the outset the importance now attached by Canada to Arctic cooperation.

Second, in responding primarily to the phenomena of a fragmented region, Canada should seek an agreement on *Basic Principles of Arctic International Relations*, in other words a Basic Principles Agreement (BPA), among the Eight. Given the priority need for Russian engagement on behalf of cooperative stewardship, the question for Canada and the other Western states of the region is how to gain Moscow's interest. Part of the answer is to be had in an exchange in which Russian stewardship on Arctic environmental and human issues is forthcoming in return for increased security. The assumption here is that a diminished Russia, moved physically northwards with the dissolution of the USSR and identifying increasingly with the Arctic as a source of geopolitical strength, is uncertain about its future possessions and regional standing when NATO countries are already seen to have encroached upon the Federation from the west and south. Some of the reassurance Moscow needs could come in an Arctic BPA and conforming behaviour equivalent in essence to what was prescribed in the Agreement on Basic Principles of Soviet-American Relations, as proposed by the Soviet Union in 1972.³¹

An Arctic BPA would see each of the Eight undertake to refrain from any effort to obtain unilateral advantage at the expense of another party, to seek measures of nuclear arms reduction and arms control in global forums and, as the need arose, to work out regional arrangements for confidence-building and the avoidance of incidents with confrontation potential. As well, the Eight would commit to negotiate measures of cooperative stewardship to guard the region's environment against further degradation and to ensure direct consultation with Arctic residents – above all indigenous peoples – who may be most directly affected by central determinations. International security and regional stewardship would thus be linked in an Arctic BPA. Having in its own view been hard done by at the hands of the Western countries following the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia should welcome the creation of an equitable and actionable basis for its Arctic foreign relations and in particular those with the United States. As to the latter, a BPA ought to provide the occasion for a new departure in Russian-American relations, and for continuing high level US political engagement in the region's affairs. Experience with the 1972 BPA shows, however, that this kind of instrument will be of little use if the parties do not review compliance at regular intervals.

Canada should start the ball rolling when the time is right by raising the issue of an Arctic BPA at the official level with the US State Department and the Russian Foreign Ministry. Depending on the initial

³⁰ On this last point, see Elana Wilson. "Arctic Unity, Arctic Difference: Mapping the Reach of Northern Discourses," *Polar Record*. Vol. 43. 225 (2007): 125-133.

³¹ The agreement was signed 29 May 1972. It can be found at "Agreement on Basic Principles of Relations between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," *International Legal Materials*. Vol. 11 (1972): 756-760.

results, the Prime Minister might propose a trilateral negotiation to prepare an agreement for consideration and adoption at a heads-of-state meeting of the Arctic Council. It would allow for review of compliance at regular intervals by the Council as presently constituted or by a Council enlarged. This brings us to the institutional preconditions for effective international cooperation at the regional level.

Reluctant to countenance central regional governance institutions, the Eight have presided over an Arctic Council that broadly suits them. The question is whether and how they may be brought to strengthen the Council's ability to contribute to Arctic stewardship. For the Eight to move in this direction, they will need prompting and assistance from down south, which is to say from their own southern majorities and/or from non-Arctic states and peoples. We may expect climate change to move the public in some of the ice states to new levels of regional awareness, concern for the living conditions of Arctic inhabitants, and to sharper demands for Arctic environmental protection in coming years. As well and if they were encouraged to do so, non-Arctic actors could prove effective in bringing new drive and resources to the Council. Best of all, the governments of the Eight would respond to southern promptings and proceed themselves to take the initiative in moving to stronger governance in having the Council encourage and coordinate specific stewardship projects – be they sub-regional or regional, Arctic-only or inclusive of non-Arctic participation. In our view, the prospects for cooperative stewardship are greatest when it comes to interested non-Arctic states and intergovernmental entities. To see how non-Arctic participation might enhance the outlook for cooperative stewardship, we need first to consider the Council as it is.

The Arctic Council is a standing conference with two tiers of participants and a growing gallery of state, intergovernmental and nongovernmental observers who may mingle with the Eight in the corridors but have little or no right to speak formally. At the Council's most recent meeting, in November 2008, there were 160 people present.³² The proceedings are consensual. There are no votes and therefore no formal decisions. There is, however, a hierarchy and some informality.

At the top, the tier of the Eight have the right themselves alone to state the consensus of the Council, be it at ministerial meetings every two years, at periodic gatherings of senior Arctic officials (SAOs) or in the varied working groups in which the real work of the Arctic Council is thus far done. In tier two we have the permanent participants who represent international Arctic indigenous peoples: the Aleut International Association, Arctic Athabaskan Council, Gwich'in Council International, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON, a national organization) and the Saami Council. Permanent participants enter freely into the deliberations of the Eight. Although they must yield to the Arctic states when unbridgeable differences arise, permanent participants do shape the Council's consensus. And then, below tier two, we have an array of non-participants consisting of "observer states" such as France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom; "ad-hoc observer states" like China, European Commission, Italy and South Korea and "observer organizations" including the Association of World Reindeer Herders, International Arctic Science Committee, Nordic Council of Ministers and the World Wildlife Federation. We are principally concerned here with state observers: regular, pending ("ad-hoc"), intergovernmental and national. Non-Arctic states and the European Commission are not entitled to speak at Council meetings except perhaps when one of them, Netherlands for example, summarizes the views of all in a three- or four-minute intervention at the end of a SAO meeting. When the Aleut International Association is entitled to speak freely and the non-Arctic state virtually not at all, we have to ask why the observer states are there at all. Before answering we need to make a few things clear.

³² DFAIT communication to the author, also providing an update on Arctic Council participation, 23 December 2008. The Arctic Council's website is www.arctic.council.org.

In the practice of indigenous non-governmental organizations dealing directly with nation-states we encounter the single most vital attribute of the Arctic Council. Direct engagement of permanent participants helps to ensure that the assessments and the underlying judgments of Arctic governments far removed from the scene are properly adapted to the real-life situation on site, including in very small indigenous communities. As well, the ability of permanent participants to intervene makes it more likely that collective action in the Arctic is not merely respectful of the realities but ethical. Effects of this kind are achieved when those most vulnerable to the human and environmental consequences of collective action are directly involved in the process whereby situations are evaluated and state action is coordinated. No way, therefore, can we jeopardize the ability of the permanent participants to make a contribution. And yet, something must be done to enhance the Council's capacity for collective action and for cooperative stewardship in particular.

The question for Canada and the rest of the Eight is whether non-Arctic states can be brought into the governance of the region and their interests channelled to the benefit of cooperative stewardship without compromising either the sovereignty of Arctic states or the position of the permanent participants. We believe they can. We therefore propose that selected non-Arctic states and intergovernmental entities be included as *consultative parties* to the Arctic Council.³³

Although they will certainly vary in this, non-Arctic states and intergovernmental entities are in a position to bring substantial benefits to a regional practice of cooperative stewardship. Approaching the Arctic from the outside, they are likely not only to bring a stronger regional perspective to the work of the Council, but also to prompt greater awareness of the regional as distinct from the sub-regional and local in the approaches of the Eight themselves. Moved by what we take to be enduring interests in climate protection, energy security, resource transportation, pollution prevention and conflict avoidance as well as the rule of law, participation by non-Arctic states stands to strengthen a discourse and practice of cooperative stewardship in the Council's work. Indeed, whereas the work of the Council takes place at present in working groups mostly occupied with monitoring and assessment, the presence of non-Arctic states should help to shift the focus to plenary sessions, to priorities for the region as a whole and to common practices of stewardship. Furthermore, we would expect those with consultative-party status to contribute to an Arctic Fund with amounts to be matched by the Eight and applied to the costs of collective action for which at present there is little or no money beyond that provided by the proponents of Working Group projects. And why should non-Arctic participants make a financial contribution?

The answer is the same as for why the non-Arctic state sits in the Council as observer today: future considerations. Shipping, for example, is one of China's three stated priorities in observing. Energy security and climate change are among the key concerns of the European Commission. Non-Arctic actors are building positions in an area of the world that is seen to affect them and in which they one day will want to operate in safe, efficient and sustainable fashion. Meanwhile, they also have responsibilities for what happens in the region. Over the generations the 490 million people of the present-day European Union, for example, have contributed to the mounting crisis of adaptation to climate change in the Arctic. They have an obligation to assist. Whether it is future advantage or existing obligation, the fit between non-Arctic motivations and an agenda of cooperative stewardship should be a good one.

Accordingly we propose that the Arctic Council be enlarged to admit a third tier of capable non-Arctic states as consultative parties with speaking rights equivalent to those of the Eight and permanent participants.

³³ A proposal to grant non-Arctic states and intergovernmental organizations "a recognized status in the governance system of the Arctic" has already been made by Professor Oran Young. See: Oran Young, "Whither the Arctic? Conflict or cooperation in the circumpolar North." 80.

Candidates, presumably beginning with those already present as observers, would be asked to provide a statement of interest in the region, a plan of action on behalf of cooperative stewardship and an annual contribution to the Arctic Fund. All proceedings of Council, subsidiary bodies included, would remain consensual.

The Eight, for their part, would continue to state the consensus of Council including on allocations of the Fund. They would however need to hear and take due account of the views of outside others actually or potentially affected by regional cooperation and the lack of it. Some adjustment in the understandings and preferences of the Eight for regional political development could be expected from a discussion that laid greater emphasis on extra-regional and global considerations. The regional states would no doubt come forward with stronger regional perspectives themselves. In our view this would be all to the good. At the same time, the Eight could themselves expect a reduction in the dependence of national Arctic conditions on non-Arctic processes and events.

As to permanent participants, they would continue to take part on a par with states large and small in an enlarged forum now open in principle to numerous countries with significant interests in this part of the world. They would also find themselves coping with a considerably more elaborate agenda extending from assessment to the coordination and support of joint action by varying arrangements of Arctic and non-Arctic states and intergovernmental organizations configured according to the particular purposes of cooperation. Hard-pressed to deal effectively with the steadily more technical business of the Arctic Council as it presently exists, permanent participants would surely risk being sidelined in a larger and more effective forum if new support for policy development, staffing, and quite simply attendance at meetings were not forthcoming. In our view, enlargement should be seen to present not a threat but an opportunity to strengthen the ability of permanent participants to make contributions over and above present levels. The opportunity would arise with the creation of an Arctic Fund, which has to be seen as an essential element of our proposal for enlargement.

Financial assistance for permanent participant capacity-building should be agreed as the first priority of a new Fund. Furthermore and in a return to original Canadian thinking about the ethical dimension of the Council's activities, the Eight could consider granting permanent participants a direct say in the Council's consensus (in effect, a veto and the opportunity to bargain) on issues on which the Arctic states could be persuaded of an existential threat to indigenous peoples.³⁴ Assisting the permanent participants to play a larger role in the coordination and support of stewardship in the region, a restructured Council should not only maintain but also strengthen the capacity for adapted and ethical action on the part of interested states. Still, there is a big question.

Even if we assume that non-Arctic actors and permanent participants could be brought to accept enlargement along the lines being discussed here, why should the Eight go along? Granted that they would retain control over the consensus, why should they not only admit but also hear from China, India and Japan, to say nothing of Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom? Would this not open the door to progressively wider foreign infringement in the handling of matters better left to the individual Arctic state than to international cooperation and, if there is to be cooperation, to transactions among the Eight and subsets thereof? And in a similar vein, why should the Eight agree to assessed contributions when the United States, for one, has expressly opposed the idea?³⁵

³⁴ Arctic Council Panel. "To Establish an International Arctic Council." 32.

³⁵ See footnote 24 above.

In admitting non-Arctic observers the Eight have already declared in favour of the non-Arctic interest in the conduct of Arctic affairs. Having cracked open the door, they cannot close it without in effect declaring the Arctic to be governable by the Eight alone. The region is, we repeat, heavily dependent upon global processes that are best addressed in conjunction with non-Arctic actors engaged in the region's affairs as influentials, resource users and producers, as well as recipients of Arctic transboundary effects on a global level. Furthermore, within non-Arctic countries denied enhanced access to the chief forum of an increasingly accessible region some are sure to seek out other ways of making themselves heard. Playing in particular upon differences between Russia and the seven others, they could make the Arctic into a more conflicted region, thereby imposing new direct and opportunity costs upon the Eight. All this being understood, the Arctic states might nevertheless opt to keep the door just as it is: they could maintain the status quo of minimal regional governance and maximal freedom of national action, which is to say fragmented incrementalism. In so doing, we submit, they would pay a price.

Arctic sovereigns must engage non-Arctic others if they are to bend conditions of interdependence to the national interest. To engage others, the Eight must at a minimum grant them the right to speak, and not only on matters of direct interest to them. Not to engage is to accept avoidable deprivation when the sovereign should be optimizing conditions of the national domain. The same applies to the projection of an Arctic voice in global councils, a task whose performance will be all the stronger with informed allies on the outside. Most important from the standpoint of the Eight, Arctic Council enlargement for cooperative stewardship would add legitimacy to an arrangement that continued to privilege them. Stewardship as we understand it insists on the primacy of the local in Arctic governance. The Arctic states have themselves yielded to the local in undertaking to hear directly in the Council from indigenous peoples' organizations as representatives of those most directly concerned and informed. In our view, this gives them an authentic claim on non-Arctic actors to yield to those with the most immediate knowledge and greatest stake in collective action.

Accordingly we believe it best for the Eight not to leave the Arctic Council as is. On the contrary, they should bring selected non-Arctic states and intergovernmental entities to the table in an arrangement that maintains their power of determination and enhances their sovereignty in conditions of interdependence. As to a formula for contributions to an Arctic Fund, it should not be difficult to find once enlargement is agreed upon in principle.³⁶

Moving from the multilateral in our search for greater capacity to make things happen in the region, we recommend that Canada also develop *new bilateral Arctic strategic relationships* with the United States, Europe and China. Russia is not on the list because it is best dealt with in the company of others. Given the familiar Canada-US commonalities and the continuing pre-eminence of US power, Washington comes first.

Although the Obama Administration could surprise us with Arctic initiatives of its own, experience suggests that other issues and other areas of the world will continue to crowd the region off of the priority list for the US Government. Still, if a regional practice of cooperative stewardship is to advance, the United

³⁶ Quite apart from whatever President Obama and his people might prefer, the Bush Administration's opposition to assessed contributions was expressed in a context of resistance to change in the Council's mandate and status as a "forum." What we are proposing here, enlargement for cooperative stewardship, requires no change of mandate. Nor do we seek to change the Council into a formal international organization. Still, in calling for matching contributions we are proposing to endow the Council with new capability. Best would be, in our view, for the Eight to begin by setting non-Arctic membership dues as function of what, to begin with, needs doing and what the Eight are themselves prepared to pay and how – according to GDP, which of course would require very heavy reliance upon the United States; in equal contributions, which presumably would allow Iceland to set the rate owing to ability to pay; or by another formula arising from talks with today's observers.

States must be engaged. This applies above all to Arctic Council enlargement. Canada's task here is not to encourage the United States to commit to new governance arrangements or to the region itself. Rather it is to persuade Washington that new Arctic engagements can effectively serve US global interests. We have already argued that an Arctic BPA should be promoted by the Prime Minister as a means for the United States to renew the collaborative dimension in US-Russian relations worldwide. To what has been said we would add only two items, one small and one large. First, to counter predictions of sharpening Arctic conflict that could be fulfilled if left unchallenged, and also to demonstrate Basic Principles in action, Canada and the United States ought to lead in a joint oil-spill response exercise at the North Pole by ice-breakers of the Eight and interested non-Arctic countries. More important, the Prime Minister of Canada needs, at the appropriate moment, to open a conversation with the President on Arctic opportunities – especially in the matter of Arctic Council enlargement – to break free of the past in matters of climate change.

In 2009, and for some time thereafter, issues of climate change will be secondary to those of economic recovery and yet primary in the elaboration of new approaches to the environment that are focussed on alternative energy sources. On both accounts, economic and environmental, Canada is all but certain to follow in the wake of US thinking and decisions. There is, however, an opportunity as well as a need for Canada to lead. Science seems sure to show not only continued but also accelerating climate change in the Arctic. Climate change may in addition present us with non-linear developments for which we have no adequate understanding. Taken up by a more receptive US Government, new Arctic change reports are likely to authorize proposals for collective action that have thus far been excluded from mainstream discourse. Even before his Presidential inauguration, Barack Obama made clear the need to “reinvigorate international institutions to deal with transnational threats, like climate change, that we can't solve on our own.”³⁷ Arctic Council enlargement for stronger cooperative stewardship would seem to be in line with this kind of thinking.

Addressing the challenge of climate change, the Prime Minister should, when the time is right, invite President Obama to join in the creation of a bi-national Canada-US panel to chart a way for cooperative stewardship in the Arctic, and to make it exemplary for the planet as a whole. Although its focus should be made tight, the panel's ambit could in principle range from environmental ethics, to the provision of adaptive support for isolated small communities, the eradication of black carbon (sooty smokestack emissions from ships that make for an easily reduced share of global warming owing to their melting effect on Arctic ice and snow) and on out to the need for geophysical and chemical engineering to save the climate in which we have thrived.³⁸ And there is still more to be done with the United States.

Together with stewardship, security should also be sought in a unified North American approach to the evolution of the Arctic as an international political region. For Canada, this means first of all overcoming insecurities of our own that have kept us at arms length from the United States when it comes to the Arctic. The issue here is the Northwest Passage. Canada is now in a position to take the initiative in strengthening the Canada-US agreement to disagree over the international legal status of the waters of our Arctic archipelago. As elaborated elsewhere, this agreement has steadily become stronger and largely so by dint of our own efforts.³⁹ We should now surround it with a bodyguard of bilateral Arctic cooperation. This means

³⁷ John Ibbitson. “Ambitious agenda awaits new cabinet,” *Globe and Mail*. (18 December 2008). A21.

³⁸ On black carbon, see: Martin Mittelstaedt. “The high cost of blowing smoke on the high seas,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 April 2009:A11, which reports a joint Canada-U.S. proposal to the International Maritime Organization to establish emission control zones off the east and west coasts, but not in Arctic North America. As to climate engineering: David G. Victor et al. “The Geoengineering Option,” *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 88 no. 2 (March/April 2009): 64-76.

³⁹ Franklyn Griffiths. “Canadian Arctic Sovereignty: Time to Take Yes for an Answer,” in *Northern Exposure: People, Powers and Prospects for Canada's North*. edited by Frances Abele et al. (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2009). <http://www.irpp.org/books/archive/AOTS4/griffiths.pdf>.

cooperative stewardship that is at once mutually beneficial, runs counter to the Canadian inclination to think of the Arctic in terms of "use it or lose it," and opens a way to joint leadership in shaping the future of the Arctic as a region.

The range of potential bilateral stewardship activity for Canada and the United States is formidable. It runs from the development of ecosystem-based joint management of the Beaufort Sea in which our two countries have a boundary delimitation dispute,⁴⁰ to Coast Guard cooperation in search and rescue operations, improvement of oil-spill clean-up capabilities, joint environmental monitoring, planning for small-community adaptation to climate change, precautionary fisheries management, new arrangements to protect the Porcupine caribou herd, harmonization of vessel-identification and notification systems, control of cruise-ship navigation in icy waters and so on out to strategic planning for intercontinental shipping in the Arctic waters of North America. On this last point, do our two countries want an increase in the volume of commercial navigation sufficiently to encourage it? Is it in our shared economic as well as geopolitical interest to underwrite international use of the Northwest Passage, for what cargoes, between which destinations, against what alternative routes and with the provision of how much icebreaker and other support for convoys as opposed to independent navigation by ice-capable merchantmen? In all of this it should be possible for us in Canada to achieve a position of confidence and strength as distinct from the needless vulnerability that prevails today, of cooperative stewardship as distinct from imperilled sovereignty, of attention to milieu as distinct from possession goals.

Aside from the use of cooperative stewardship arrangements in contributing to a steadily more secure Canada-US relationship in the Arctic, we also need more coordinated action for the physical security of Arctic North America. Arctic maritime domain awareness and control need to be enhanced as priorities of the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD). More important, the Obama Administration seems likely to provide new international security openings that Canada could take up as they relate to Russia's capacity for cooperative stewardship. The issues here are missile defence and the weaponization of space. On both of these, the Administration's preference to scale down is sure to be opposed within the United States. On both of these, Russia has been not only opposed but adamant and committed to countermeasures that include the acquisition of new strategic nuclear missiles.⁴¹ Should US commitments to missile defence and space weaponization persist, we ought to expect not only Russian military involvement but regional and political countermeasures including the Arctic. Cooperative stewardship is likely to be among the victims.

To avert sequences such as these, Canada needs now to take public-diplomacy as well as formal negotiating positions in global forums that offer the US Government strong support, and even outdo it, not only on the militarization of space and on missile defence but also on an ASAT ban. No way should we be interpreted here to be urging an Arctic "wag the dog" when it comes to Canada's global security stance. All we are saying is that if we are to treat the evolution of the Arctic as a strategic priority, then we must view global security processes in the light of our ambitions for the future of the region that is now emerging from the cold before our very eyes. Greenland remains one last area of joint concern for Canada and the United States.

⁴⁰ Norway is the regional leader in ecosystem-based joint management. Royal Norwegian Ministry of the Environment. *Report No. 8 to the Storting (2005-2006): Integrated Management of the Marine Environment of the Barents Sea and the Sea Areas off the Lofoten Islands*. (Oslo: Government Publications, 2006).

⁴¹ Pavel Podvig and Hui Zhang. *Russian and Chinese Responses to U.S. Military Plans in Space*.

A unified North American approach to the Arctic requires that Canada and the US pay considerably greater attention to Greenland. Inhabiting what is now a self-governing area of the Danish realm, the 55,000 Greenlanders, all but a small minority Inuit, seem certain to declare independence without delay in the event they strike oil or natural gas in sufficient quantity.⁴² The Arctic Eight would become the Arctic Nine. Permanent participants in the Arctic Council would to some extent gain in their ability to shape the consensus. Alert to new opportunity, non-North American and non-Arctic countries could soon be showing greater interest in Greenlandic affairs. So also should Canada and the United States, whether or not independence is in the offing. Danish rule has worked strongly for a European orientation among Greenlanders, even as they view the European Union with aversion that stems from past experience with the sealskin ban and European overfishing in Greenlandic waters. North America does not really figure in Greenland's view of its future. Although US-Greenland relations have generally been good with the exception of the forced relocation of a high northern community to make way for the base at Thule, ties with Canada have been minimal. Both Ottawa and Washington need to change things. To begin, they ought to include Greenland in any planning for harmonized management of the Arctic waters of North America including on the question of whether or not in the first place intercontinental commercial shipping is to be encouraged when the global economy allows. As well, Ottawa needs to promote and finance broader and deeper relations between Nunavut and Greenland with Denmark's support. In due course, Canada, Greenland and the United States should bring an integrated North American perspective to bear in pan-Arctic discussion of the region's future.

As to Europe, there's much to be considered by Canada in generating greater capacity for stewardship in the Arctic. Dialogue on the present situation, the future of the region and the potential for joint action is needed to build this capacity. Specifically, we think it useful to discuss access to Canadian high Arctic island reserves of natural gas, Arctic Council enlargement and possible Arctic implications of the Russian proposal for a renewed Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Aside from the European Commission, Canada should be talking principally to the Government of Germany owing *inter alia* to the German fascination with things northern and Arctic. Where Arctic gas is concerned, Canada has great reserves in Nunavut's Sverdrup Basin. They are unlikely, we are advised, to go to US markets until Western Canadian shale gas is used up or becomes too expensive. Instead, when conditions are right high Arctic Canadian natural gas will be liquefied and shipped year-round by icebreaking liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker to European or Asian markets with the assent and participation of the Government of Nunavut.

We think the EU and, with it, Germany should have first preference in view of its desire to reduce dependence on Russian supplies and its potential to contribute to pan-Arctic stewardship once directly involved in the affairs of the region.⁴³ At the same time, the EU would need to adapt to Canadian views and those of the Inuit Circumpolar Council on the issue of seal hunting if it were to pursue the option of consultative-party status in a restructured Arctic Council.⁴⁴ Whatever the outcome of bilateral dialogue on energy, marine transportation, indigenous-peoples' and Arctic governance issues, the Canadian interest in cooperative stewardship warrants an ambitious effort to create common ground with the EU. Meanwhile, matters of common security should also be discussed with Berlin and Brussels as they relate to the Arctic.

⁴² "The dominating political current in Greenland these years is aiming at more political independence from Denmark." Remark made by Juliane Henningsen, MP Denmark/Greenland, at a gathering of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region. (New York, 4 June 2008). Accessed 27 February 2009, www.arcticparl.org/reports.aspx?id=2966 For now, the trend is expressed in movement to "self-rule."

⁴³ The recent Arctic policy statement of the European Union speaks of "facilitating the sustainable and environmentally friendly exploration, extraction and transportation of Arctic hydrocarbon resources" in the context of "enhancing the EU's security of supply." Commission of the European Communities. "Arctic Regions." Section 3.1.

⁴⁴ Currently the EU is moving in the opposite direction. See Keith Doucette. "EU closer to total ban on Canadian seal products," *Globe and Mail*. (3 March 2009). A8.

Moscow is currently seeking to convene a renewed CSCE as a means of restructuring the security architecture of Europe.⁴⁵ As with an Arctic BPA, the question for a Canada-European dialogue is whether the CSCE project might also be used to bring Russia to provide stewardship in exchange for security in the Arctic. It is still early days, but we believe the project should be explored. A new CSCE would be a vast and unwieldy affair with everyone from Kazakhstan to Ireland plus Canada and the United States represented at the head-of-state level in a sequence of consensual gatherings set up by preparatory conferences. Whereas the original CSCE was dominated by issues of human rights and military confidence-building, a contemporary version would presumably focus on economy, energy and climate change. It would also consider a rearrangement of the European security system to include the Russian Federation as a central player. Inimical to NATO as it stands, the Russian proposal is problematic. At the same time and partly on the prompting of Norway, which feels itself inordinately exposed to Russian pressure, and partly in response to the 2008 events in South Ossetia, there is a tendency in NATO to inch toward a role in the Arctic in the event this part of the world becomes more conflictual and alliance interests need a stronger defence.

In our view, when five of the Arctic Eight are NATO members there is no need at present for new alliance commitments in the region. There may however be the elements of a deal in a renewed CSCE. In a new Arctic "basket," to use the phrase of the 1970s, commitments to build good relations in the Arctic could be elaborated in conjunction with extensive new stewardship activity for climate and environmental protection. Initiatives such as these might go some of the way toward reducing the need for a new NATO role, while also bringing on a greater Russian commitment to cooperative stewardship. Meanwhile, there would be no reason for either the Eight or the permanent participants in the Arctic Council to be concerned over extra-regional infringement upon the Council's mandate: the Eight would be present and, necessarily, permanent participants as well in a renewed CSCE process in which all commitments would be consensual, as would collective reviews of implementation.

China comes last in this discussion of bilateral relations that Canada might foster in strengthening the capacity for collective action at the regional level. A major force in world politics today and assuredly a preeminent power in the future, China is already present in the Arctic. It conducts scientific research at a station on Norway's Svalbard archipelago, periodically operates an icebreaker as a science platform in Arctic waters and is present as an observer at the Arctic Council. China is also and foremost a great trading nation. We fully expect one day to see not only Chinese commercial vessels but also the Chinese navy in the Arctic. As for Canada, it has a strong interest in trade expansion with China and should now be preparing the way for Chinese as well as EU participation in the exploitation of high Arctic natural gas, again with participation of the Government of Nunavut. Given present interests and future prospects in Canadian-Chinese Arctic relations, an active effort should now be made to bring China directly into the Arctic region as a steward and as a new member of the community, rather than have them come in later as intruders and in a manner that is likely to cause conflict. As Canada led the way in recognizing the Communist government of China, so let us now be among the first to open wide the Arctic door to Beijing. Trade, joint industrial production and investment – call it commerce for short – should be the focus.

As has been noted, in the Arctic the east-west flow of goods, people and in lesser measure, ideas, is impoverished. Cross border transactions between Norway and Northwestern Russia are an exception.⁴⁶ Overall, the effect is Arctic solidarity foregone – the solidarity that comes with the experience of shared

⁴⁵ "Russian Deputy Foreign Minister discusses European security proposal with OSCE states." *OSCE Press Release*. (18 February 2009). Accessed 26 February 2009, <http://www.osce.org/itm/36321.html>.

⁴⁶ See Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *The Norwegian Government's High Northern Strategy*. (Oslo, December 2006). Part 4.

effort and mutual benefit and that could be needed in times of stress among the Eight. Another result of the lack of commerce in particular: an entire domain of normal human activity left very largely indolent and, with it, habits of cooperation that could well spill over into the political domain. We say this in the belief that commercial activity is a source of stability. Prompting a desire to maintain good relations and to avoid giving offence, commercial interaction makes for civility, which is to say respect and consideration for the other that is not unlike the care that is characteristic of stewardship. If so, Canada should endeavour to provide regional leadership in the development of Arctic commercial relations in cooperation with China. Here we could well benefit from a trilateral relationship with Norway.

In a seeming replay of CSCE agenda items, Norway has shown great imagination in promoting the free flow of people and goods across its northernmost border with the Russian Federation. As well, StatoilHydro plans to work closely with its Russian counterpart Gazprom in the exploitation of hydrocarbon reserves under the Barents Sea, which is as well an area of contested jurisdiction between the two countries. One predictable effect of Norwegian-Russian collaboration such as this is to enculture the Russian oil and gas industry in best global commercial practices including on matters of environmental protection, practices to which it would otherwise not be exposed. To the extent that a leading Russian industry with global reach is made more environmentally aware in the course of joint industrial operations in the Barents Sea, the Arctic serves not only as the recipient of extra-regional influences but also as a contributor to global well-being. There is a precedent here that might be followed more broadly: in both regional and global affairs, stewardship should engage commerce and industry as well as government and communities most exposed to the consequences of centralized decision.

Although Canada and Norway on their own could elaborate and present the Arctic Council with a commercial strategy for regional solidarity and cooperation we suggest that, if agreeable to Norway, China be invited to join an exploration of the potential for new Arctic trade and joint industrial ventures. On the last, for example, why not barge-mounted nuclear-powered or LNG electricity generation for small Arctic communities? As to trade and intercontinental marine transportation, China has already indicated an interest and doubtless has something to offer. In short, if China is to become a consultative party to the Arctic Council, let us consult with the Chinese. Then let us seek wider support for a regional commercial strategy that is not only fully justifiable on the merits, but also able to foster pan-Arctic solidarity.

In wrapping up this proposal for a Canadian strategy, we might go on to identify and prioritize the chief governance requirements, starting with the marine environment.⁴⁷ Alternatively, we could delve into one or two particular issues, for instance those relating to adaptation to climate change or to the management of Arctic marine transportation, in order to illustrate the benefits of an international practice of stewardship. Or we could begin thinking about how to rank competing projects for support from an Arctic Fund once capacity-building for permanent participants had been tended to. All well and good enough, we choose not to enter a discussion of desired outcomes at this time. In place of outcomes, we insist on the primacy of preconditions. As long as the preconditions are lacking, talk of Arctic cooperation is unlikely to be followed by effective joint action. Working with the available materials, we need first to heighten the interest of Arctic and non-Arctic states in the region's affairs. We need to find ways of moving Arctic stewardship

⁴⁷ Timo Koivurova and Erik J. Molenaar. "International Governance and Regulation of the Marine Arctic: A report prepared for the WWF International Arctic Programme." (Oslo: WWF Arctic Programme, 20 January 2009). Accessed 28 February 2009, http://assets.panda.org/downloads/gap_analysis_marine_resources_130109.pdf. The WWF is to be commended for this report, which amounts to a very lengthy shopping list for Arctic international cooperation on marine-related matters. The authors do not however establish criteria of relative importance, consider interdependencies between issues or prioritize international action on the "regulatory gaps" they identify.

from the domain of situation reports and useful guidelines to that of active coordination of and support for voluntary cooperative arrangements. These are arrangements that will arise not from the mind of a governing institution, but from the perceived needs of Arctic and non-Arctic states as brought together in a central coordinating forum.

We have suggested that the key objectives of a Canadian Arctic strategy come down to elevation, engagement and invigoration. We have sought to show how these varied objectives may be pursued in an interrelated fashion. Still, if there is one proposal in this paper that is absolutely essential in achieving a stronger regional capacity for cooperative stewardship, it is Arctic Council enlargement. We believe it to be negotiable, not quickly but over time, if a sustained effort is made. There are three main reasons for optimism. Firstly, future considerations will continue to make non-Arctic players want in. Serious discussion of enlargement will make the Eight more amenable, which is our initial impression after talking to senior officials of two Arctic countries at a meeting in Berlin in March 2009. Secondly, accelerating climate change, plus the prospect and arrival of unheard-of energy prices, will make the state of the Arctic ever more a global concern. Lastly, it is becoming easier and easier to envisage the rise of a global awareness that the fate of what we've been pleased to call civilization depends on nothing less than our ability to keep the Arctic cold. Amidst sharpening controversy, issue-based, sectoral and regional cooperative stewardship could give way to strategic global intervention in Arctic affairs, climate geo-engineering included. If so, cooperative stewardship would have served well in preparing us for the next steps. If not, it will have served us well on its own.

3. DOMESTIC SOURCES OF STEWARDSHIP

Having dwelt at length on the need for Canada to show leadership in building new capacity for stewardship in the Arctic, it would be irresponsible not to consider how Canada might itself summon the will to lead. In our view the stakes are such that Canada has no choice but to join with others in a common effort to intensify and channel Arctic political interaction to the benefit of cooperative stewardship. But that is our view. Regrettably, and it is necessary to be realistic about this as well, we Canadians share the reluctance of other Arctic nations to come out of the shell of concern over our possessions and take milieu goals to heart. Vigorous leadership will be required if we are to leave our Arctic disabilities behind. Ways must be found for far removed southern Canadians to take heed from northerners, especially our Arctic indigenous peoples who together constitute a kind of distant early warning line or system of alert to climate change.⁴⁸ But little of enduring value will happen, avoidable losses will be inflicted upon us and excellent opportunities squandered unless, as we have already stated, the Prime Minister leads personally. But why should we and, especially, the Prime Minister venture into the Arctic when it is so challenging to lead not only out there but also in here? What is at stake?

Since we Canadians tend to focus more easily on losses than gains, let us first deal with the down side of failure to rise to the occasion in the Arctic. The more inattentive we are to a part of the world that is close to us and should be home to us, the more likely we are to yield to the values, interests and decisions of others. The prime casualty of a failure to take decisive action in the Arctic will be self-marginalization and, in due course, loss of self-respect. Then there are the transboundary processes and resources which we would have left to themselves in passing on improved pan-Arctic governance for cooperative stewardship:

⁴⁸ A discussion of the issues is available in Franklyn Griffiths. "Camels in the Arctic?" *The Walrus*. (November 2007): 46-61.

new and old migratory fish species, oil-spill disasters from vessels or drilling platforms at sea, the plentiful non-CO2 sources of global warming in cruise-ship smokestack emissions, Arctic and global land-based sources of ecosystem degradation that ignore Canadian lines of jurisdiction and so on. In these matters it is sovereignty, in the sense of the ability to fully possess and enjoy what's ours by right, that would suffer.

If all this were not enough, there is the potential for major direct and opportunity costs in the event that negligence on the part of Canada and the rest of the Eight saw regional and extra-regionally generated conflict outstrip the growth of governance in the Arctic. Not only would we be hard-pressed alone to defend the entirety of our Arctic archipelago in a heavily conflicted and militarized region, but the absolute cost and opportunities foregone in defence spending and other missions in the world, to say nothing of social programmes and tax reduction, could well be insupportable. Although developments such as these may seem improbable today, it would be foolhardy to exempt ourselves now from a vigorous effort to accentuate the pacific in the Arctic's political development. No less important and perhaps more germane, given a renewed play for Arctic resources and geopolitical position before too long, it would be self-defeating to leave ourselves open to a full-on regional replay of the unsustainable resource exploitation that's brought the planet's climate to its present state.

As to the gains that may come from a strategy of stewardship, they arise from an extraordinary act of anthropogenic fate. The Arctic is not the region that has always been there. Instead, Canada is being given a third ocean, beckoning as a shared international space. Of all the regions of the world, the sea and land area of the Arctic is surely the one in which Canada can most readily make a difference for the better. The opening Arctic presents Canada with a unique opportunity for a fresh start. We should seize it. We should offer leadership in the design of an agreed future for the region, in the creation of improved means of governance, in the avoidance of unsustainable development and in the construction of a new political space in which all begin to show greater respect in their relations with the world of nature and one another.

Lest all this seem overly lyrical, we should also be aware of the direct benefits that are to be had from new linkages between the Arctic and our global interests. Rather than remain a place apart, under a strategy of stewardship the Arctic would bring us new advantage in our trade, political and military relations with major powers of the world. Plenty is to be gained here that has not even been tentatively considered by Canadians in their approach to the region thus far. And all along there are the unexploited contributions to Canadian sovereignty that could come from a strategy of cooperative stewardship. When national holdings are very largely assured, as we believe they are in this part of the world, the sovereign is in a position to do more than see to possession. The sovereign should use the opportunity to improve the quality of life in his or her domain by not only reducing unfavourable trans-boundary effects, but also by containing national occupancy costs that could rise if the potential for regional conflict were left unattended.

No way, we submit, can Canada walk away from the opportunities and let losses come as they may in the Arctic. Canadians have no alternative but to engage in the region's affairs, and to engage vigorously. How we engage will be determined, however, not only by the situation in the Arctic at large, but also by obstacles to engagement as they exist in this country. They are to be found, we believe, in public opinion and in the inclinations of federal government officials, which broadly reflect those of the general public. As well, some resistance may be encountered from the territorial governments and Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples' organizations faced with the possibility of being sidelined in an invigorated Arctic Council.

Though perhaps less focused as a result of the recession, public interest in the Arctic and in climate change is still substantial in Canada. Especially where the archetypal issue of the Northwest Passage is evoked, sovereignty is the chief concern and point of departure. Indeed, climate change first entered the Canadian imagination not so much as a problem in its own right, but as a threat to sovereignty in that

reduced ice cover was thought to make for easier intrusion into our waters by unauthorized foreign vessels. Today, the prototypical possession goal, sovereignty, still has precedence over the quintessential milieu goal, climate protection, in the way we tend to frame the issues in the Arctic. "Use it or lose it" thinking has inhibited us from looking very far beyond what is ours. Instead, we have surrendered to possession anxiety.

Promoted by academic purveyors of polar peril and amplified by the media, an unwarranted sense of Arctic vulnerability has come upon us. Prone to exaggerated threat assessment and overly insistent on the need for hardware to assert control, Canadians in the grip of possession anxiety are given to self-doubt when actually the outlook is good. Certainly this is true for the Northwest Passage.⁴⁹ The same may be said of our share of the Arctic outer continental shelf, whose delineation is governed by the law of the sea and backed up by a correlation of forces that is heavily in favour of Canada if ever we had to call upon it.⁵⁰ And yet, Canadians worry, and journalists and editorialists feed on this worry. Sensationalism becomes the order of the day in commentary on a part of the world very few know much about. Politicians, especially in a minority government situation, are readily spooked by news of impending Arctic danger and the need to defend. They join a misguided discourse and reinforce it by committing to still more resolute defences of sovereignty. Or they turn the Arctic sovereignty issue to use in "identity politics" so as to bolster appearances of attachment to the True North and to put political distance between themselves and the United States.⁵¹ Net effect: a Canadian public that would have us move knowingly and confidently into the Arctic is not here today. It will have to be created if a Canadian Arctic strategy of cooperative stewardship is to become domestically viable. And then there is the federal government apparatus.

As every schoolchild knows, bureaucracy does two things well – crisis and routine – and nothing in between. A new Arctic strategy falls naturally into the in-between. In our experience, Canada is gifted with a truly admirable federal civil service. Given the right political leadership, it does great things. But given the peripheral standing of the region in the scheme of things as seen from the south, officials are loath to take on new Arctic commitments. Instead, interviews conducted in federal departments with an interest in the Arctic made clear the existence of a consensus that Canada is already well engaged in the region under the "Northern Strategy," which has been a work in progress of governments Liberal as well as Conservative for much of the present decade.⁵² Actually, or at least from what we can make of it, the Northern Strategy is all but fully concerned with the development and well-being of Canada's domestic North. Thus far the pan-Arctic dimension is slight. This is not surprising given that the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has the lead in the strategy, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) is but one of many other government departments involved.

Nor in the circumstances is it surprising to read in a 2006-2008 DFAIT position paper on Canadian priorities for the Arctic Council that the Council was to be used to further the Government's northern priorities including the well-being of northern people and protection of the northern environment.⁵³ There can be no objection to this, as far as it goes. But Canada's foreign relations are not front and center in such a view.

⁴⁹ Franklyn Griffiths. "Canadian Arctic Sovereignty."

⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in response to a bit of Russian bluster about the creation of an Arctic special-forces unit we have little hesitation in saying we will not be "bullied." Steven Chase. "Russia won't bully Canada in Arctic, Cannon vows," *Globe and Mail*. (28 March 2009). A4. Bullied when Russia's conventional military power has crashed since the fall of the Soviet Union? When four of the five Arctic littoral states are NATO members? When any coercion of Canada in the Arctic will inevitably be treated as an act of coercion against the United States?

⁵¹ Tom Flanagan. *Harper's Team: Behind the Scenes in the Conservative Rise to Power*. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007): 245-246.

⁵² We have seen power-point versions of the strategy, but the most that is generally available is: Office of the Prime Minister. "Northern Strategy- Backgrounder." (10 March 2008). Accessed 28 February 2009, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2016>.

⁵³ DFAIT, "Arctic Council Priorities 2006-2008: Canadian Position Paper," 8 February 2007 version.

Instead, the Arctic is approached as an extension of our North. In this approach we are playing with only half of the deck in a region that is effectively severed from our wider involvement in the world. This DFAIT position paper also strikes a restrictive note in affirming that the current structure of the Arctic Council reflects and responds well to the priorities of the Eight, Canada thereby included. Say goodbye, therefore, to Arctic Council enlargement if the old political guidance were to persist. Not long ago in an interview we also heard from a senior official in the Department that sustained interest in the Arctic was hard to find above the director-general or middle management level. Say goodbye also to a lead role for DFAIT in a Canadian strategy for a region if the initiative were left to the bureaucracy. Given the right instruction from the Government, much could change and rapidly so. Indeed, encouraging signs of change are just now becoming apparent. We will come to them in a moment.

Meanwhile, territorial governments who do not enjoy the advantages of permanent participants in the Arctic Council may not be all that well disposed to what we are proposing. They may instead prefer the status quo under the Northern Strategy and its domestic priorities. The same may be true of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and possibly the Canadian office of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, to the extent they could be sidelined in Canada and internationally in an increasingly global Arctic hurly-burly. At the same time, Inuit may not only feel confident but will surely excel in global operations as well as an invigorated Canadian debate, especially if assured of new support for capacity-building. In our view, Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples and the natural environment on which they depend are more likely to fare better in an energized Arctic, than if they were to hold principally to a domestically oriented Northern Strategy.

Put all this together – public predispositions, official reluctance to act and potential resistance on the part of Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples and their organizations – and it is clear that the construction and implementation of a Canadian Arctic strategy present a leadership problem. But there are opportunities as well.

The Prime Minister is in a position to summon into being a new coalition and a new appeal by himself acting to fuse (a) the widespread interest in Arctic sovereignty with (b) the more deeply held and mobilized Canadian concern over climate change into (c) a new national commitment to cooperative stewardship in the Arctic. There is no need here to rehearse the arguments for stewardship as the best defence of sovereignty in conditions of interdependence. Nor should we at this moment endeavour ourselves to develop the case in full for an Arctic focus in Canada's climate protection effort. Suffice it to say that as climate change mounts as a public concern, as the fate of the world boils down as it were to the fate of the Arctic, a pan-Arctic focus may be made compelling to Canadians. The Arctic is also an area of the world in which Canada has a singular opportunity, to say nothing of a duty, to be effective. We made things happen here with the creation of the Arctic Council. We can do so again and, as contrasted with other aspects of our climate effort, stewardship activity in the Arctic could yield a fresh and encouraging sense of responsibility well met. Taking the regional lead in Arctic stewardship, Canadians might unexpectedly find nothing less than a twenty-first century equivalent of international peacekeeping. Viewed in such a light, an innovative approach to sovereignty and stewardship could become a new national project, this time in our own front yard. There is enough in all of this, we submit, for the Prime Minister to take a close look at the option of leading for cooperative stewardship in the Arctic.

If the Prime Minister is indeed prepared to consider bringing Canada out of the Passage, so to speak, and into the opening Ocean, emissaries might well be sent on a tour of the Arctic countries to report on the prospects of and possible first steps in an Arctic strategy. Given enough promise on their return, a senior figure in the PMO could be assigned responsibility for policy development, sequencing of initiatives and coordination of federal departments. Sooner or later a new Secretary of State for the Arctic would be appointed. Housed in DFAIT as the chief executor of a Prime Ministerial priority, this Secretary of State

would have responsibility for international and domestic Canadian representation and networking, together with stakeholder consultations in Canada. Consultation with Canadian Arctic indigenous peoples should figure prominently in his or her agenda.

In developing an Arctic strategy we to the south have much to learn from Inuit and other Arctic indigenous peoples. Unlike ours, their cultures and practices are embedded in nature. They do not aspire to dominion. And yet they find themselves on the cutting edge of climate change brought on by southern desires for mastery. If stewardship is to mean respect for, and civility to, the other in nature and humanity, Inuit in particular must be directly involved in the creation and follow-through of an integrated, ethical and enduring Canadian approach to the region. And when stewardship resides in locally informed governance, not merely the involvement but the opportunity for Arctic indigenous peoples themselves to show leadership will be an essential part of it. If we are to preach stewardship abroad, we should practice it at home.

New forums are therefore needed for north-south consensual policy dialogue in Canada. Patterned on the Marine Council that is promised in the 1993 Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, a new forum would not reinvent the wheel that already exists in Ottawa-based northern policy consultation.⁵⁴ Drawing together federal departments and Arctic stakeholders, it would serve as a locus for monitoring and priority setting in our own high Arctic and the region beyond. Equipped with a small secretariat and co-located with Canada's new high Arctic science facility, it would physically mark the new northward transfer of the Canadian imagination and political purpose. The determination and details of Canadian action in the Arctic would still however be done in Ottawa. To help bring North and south together down south, a new Standing Committee on the Arctic should be established in the House of Commons.

In closing these remarks on the challenge of leadership, we have unexpected good news to report. For the first time in nearly a decade, Canada has a Foreign Minister who is actively committed to Arctic international cooperation. Speaking in Whitehorse on 11 March 2009, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon, made a series of undertakings that moved the federal Government forward into the region.⁵⁵ Attaching "utmost priority" to the development of bilateral relations with Arctic countries and first of all the United States, the Minister promised to "re-energize" the Arctic Council and provide it with new "resources" as a "high level" forum for the coordination and making of regional policies; to work with the United States on a common agenda for the Council as of 2013, when Canada gains possession of the Chair of the Council until 2015, followed directly by the United States until 2017; and to foster an international environment that assists in the implementation of the Northern Strategy. Cannon also announced that he would soon be making a tour of the Arctic countries to start things moving. Not exactly the "elevation," "engagement" and "invigoration" we have been talking about in this paper, but getting close to it and all of a sudden.

The Prime Minister being the leader he is, the new forwardness in Canada's Arctic diplomacy must owe something to him personally and to the PMO. Still, after a meeting with the Foreign Minister it can be reported that he is in earnest, perhaps on a mission. DFAIT is now mobilized to a degree that seemed hardly possible a few months ago. We are reminded again that things can change, this time for the better and fast. We must be grateful when they do. And yet, more is needed.

⁵⁴ *Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada*. (Ottawa: Tungavik and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1993), Article 15.4.1. Still to be acted upon.

⁵⁵ "Notes for an Address by the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy," March 11, 2009, Whitehorse, Yukon. Accessed 19 March 2009, http://w01.international.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.aspx?isRedirect=True&publication_id=386933&language=E&docnumber=2009/11. Mr. Cannon was appointed Foreign Minister following the federal election of November 2008.

The Arctic foreign policy of today aims to generate support for the Northern Strategy from the international setting. The priorities of the Strategy – environmental protection, economic and social development, sovereignty and devolution and governance – are essentially domestic in nature. As we have said, it is entirely appropriate for the sovereign to pursue milieu goals that look to the well-being of the sovereign's domain and its inhabitants. Still, what Canada needs for the Arctic is an international strategy. This is one that speaks to the interests of Canadians in general as well as northerners in particular. It is one that recognizes not only that cooperation is hard to come by in the Arctic, but that it is harder than it needs to be when most of what we want to talk about to others stems directly from our internal agenda. A strategy that is regional and global in scope is needed. Other Arctic actors have come forward with strategy statements of their own. The Prime Minister should order a Canadian equivalent without delay. But who is to be directly responsible for its development and implementation?

In the last seven years, by our count, Canada has had eight foreign ministers. The position has lost its former gravitas. Lawrence Cannon, to be sure, is onto a good thing. Without question, he deserves support. But the start-up, public consultations and operation of an Arctic strategy will call for more time and imagination than a foreign minister should be expected to give. Furthermore, for an Arctic strategy to succeed, it must be handled in a manner that elevates the issues to the highest political level and, in so doing, raises public interest. Active and visible leadership from the Prime Minister is essential. We therefore propose that, rather than the Foreign Minister, a Secretary of State should be appointed to preside, as the Prime Minister's chief agent, over the implementation of a strategy whose design and operation are centered in the PMO.

To end, the Arctic is of critical importance to Canada. We have yet to realize fully what is happening in it and to us. Nevertheless, as a foreign policy domain in a changing world, the region is starting to close in on Canada-US relations in terms of its significance for this country. The success or failure of our performance in the Arctic is inseparable from the conduct of our relationship with the United States, which is the preserve of the Prime Minister. Prime responsibility for Arctic stewardship should now be seen as an essential feature of the Prime Minister's job description.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

To end, we reduce our reflections on a Canadian Arctic strategy to a set of recommendations. They come in two parts, principal and following.

Principal recommendations:

- 1) Prime Minister (PM) to take the lead.
- 2) PM to initiate development of a domestic political strategy to transmute Canadian public interest in climate protection and Arctic sovereignty into support for pan-Arctic stewardship.
- 3) PM to dispatch Foreign Minister and/or other emissaries on a tour of Arctic and certain non-Arctic capitals to report on the outlook for and likely first steps in a strategy of cooperative stewardship. Priority here to talks with the United States.
- 4) PM to demonstrate personal commitment, create opportunity for personal learning and acquire an appreciation of the region and regional visions for the future, all by convening an international Arctic Identity Network or brains trust from the Eight.

- 5) PM to assign a senior official in the PMO (PMO-A) and requisite staff with prime responsibility for policy planning and the machinery-of-government dimensions of a Canadian Arctic strategy including generation of an initial strategy statement.
- 6) PM to appoint a Secretary of State for the Arctic (SS-A) in DFAIT responsible for international networking and representation together with domestic stakeholder consultations, all with an eye to formal development of an Arctic strategy for Canadian chairmanship of the Arctic Council between 2013 and 2015.
- 7) PM to strengthen public awareness of need and opportunity to enhance Arctic cooperation with the United States as a means of stabilizing the agreement to disagree on the Northwest Passage and generating an effective North American lead for cooperative stewardship throughout the region to 2017 and beyond.
- 8) PM, when appropriate in the larger context of Canada-US relations, to seek to interest US President in Arctic Council enlargement and an Agreement on Basic Principles of Arctic International Relations as a means to improved relations with the Russian Federation together with effective Arctic governance.
- 9) PMO-A, coordinating with INAC and the evolution of the Northern Strategy, to take the lead in Canada's pan-Arctic strategy planning, sequencing of initiatives and instructions to SS-A including on stakeholder consultations.
- 10) PMO-A to be responsible for design of and federal interdepartmental participation in a new north-south Canadian consultative forum on pan-Arctic affairs patterned on the provision for a Marine Council in the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement.
- 11) PMO-A to join with appropriate others in discussion and ensuing action to constitute a Standing Committee on the Arctic in the House of Commons.
- 12) PMO-A to guide SS-A in launching Canada's effort for Arctic Council enlargement in conversations with the Eight and non-Arctic observers including on the creation of an Arctic Fund.

Following recommendations:

- 1) SS-A to represent Canada in the Arctic Council.
- 2) SS-A to explore potential for the establishment of a bi-national Canada-US panel on opportunities for cooperative stewardship in the Arctic.
- 3) SS-A to pursue, initially with US counterparts, the development of an integrated sub-regional approach to the management of the Arctic waters of North America.
- 4) SS-A to deliver maximal Canadian support for US global negotiating positions on missile defence, weaponization of space and ASAT prohibition as they relate to the Arctic.
- 5) SS-A to seek US agreement to lead a joint search and rescue exercise at the North Pole with icebreakers from the Arctic and interested non-Arctic states.

- 6) SS-A, in dialogue with counterparts, to lay the basis for Arctic-derived trade, security, climate change and other initiatives by the PM in encounters with other heads of state, notably US, Chinese and German.
- 7) SS-A to explore the potential of a renewed Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe evoke a greater commitment to cooperative stewardship from the Russian Federation.
- 8) SS-A, coordinating as necessary with the Government of Nunavut, to consult with counterparts in Berlin and Brussels on access to high Arctic natural gas, on Arctic Council enlargement, climate change and European security.
- 9) SS-A, coordinating as necessary with the Government of Nunavut, to consult with Chinese counterparts on high Arctic LNG, Arctic Council enlargement, Arctic marine transportation and Canada-China trade relations.
- 10) SS-A to consult with Norwegian counterpart on a trilateral Canadian-Chinese-Norwegian working group to prepare recommendations on regional trade expansion and industrial cooperation for presentation to the Arctic Council.
- 11) SS-A to ensure Arctic Fund support for Arctic Council permanent participant capacity-building, and to seek a direct say for permanent participants in the Council's consensus on matters of existential significance to indigenous peoples.
- 12) SS-A to lead public hearings for an Arctic strategy, and for the establishment of a Marine Council or equivalent.
- 13) SS-A to obtain Government of Nunavut and Energy, Mines and Resources Canada commitment to the development of Sverdrup Basin natural gas for LNG export to European and Asian markets.
- 14) SS-A, in conjunction with the Government of Nunavut, to widen and deepen Canada's relations with Greenland with Danish support.
- 15) SS-A to consult with Swedish counterpart on transition and prenegotiation of Canadian items prior to Canadian assumption of the Arctic Council chair in spring 2013.

ACRONYMS LIST

ASAT	anti-satellite attack technology
BPA	Basic Principles Agreement
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
EU	European Union
INAC	Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
LNG	liquefied natural gas
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Command
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
PM	Prime Minister
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PMO-A	Senior Official in the PMO
RAIPON	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
SAOs	Senior Arctic officials
SS-A	Secretary of State for the Arctic

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