

Canada an emerging great global power

By Nicholas Aristotle Demos

During the national elections of 1896, Sir Wilfrid Laurier wisely said that “the nineteenth century belonged to the United States but the twentieth century was to be Canada’s century”. The Prime Minister was right but somehow missed the timing. Extrapolation wise it seems that the twenty-first century will be Canada’s century based on economic, political and military considerations, and consequently Canada will become a strong great global power towards the end of this century,

History teaches us, at least to my understanding and interpretation, that Canada follows the basic four steps to greatness. From economic powerhouse to global trading nation then to foreign policy master and finally military influencer and projector.

Economic power and global trading nation

Let’s start with the foundation and background of our economic power. Canada (with 36 million people) is referred nowadays as an upper middle size economic power (although ranking globally 10th based on data from the International Monetary Fund, 2018) that produces roughly as much as Russia (with 145 million people), a current great power, according to the US Ministry of Defense (2018 report).

This is OK but we have not reached our full potential as yet. Not only we are not using all accessible land but with the help of climate change more fertile land will be available for comfortable living, cultivation, mining exploration and creating vibrant communities up north even around our arctic seas. Analogically, as the nineteenth century was the American century of expansion (gaining more land via war and monetary acquisitions), the twenty-first century will be Canada’s century of expansion, without even firing a shot, thanks again to environmental changes and the ice melting conditions.

We have accumulated even now adequate capital that is channeled mostly and incrementally to global expansion, but we should pay more attention and support our internal north bound expansion. Financing infrastructure and business expansion in the Canadian northlands will also help our companies expand internationally. For instance, our five major banks are today all over in Americas and possibly will expand faster abroad but should also invest more capital into our melting north. Similarly, our global B2B and B2C corporations along with pension funds and private finance capital gain ground every day in many different global markets-countries but some only foresee the potential platform and benefits of the north as a base to expand Canada’s reach to global markets. The recent formation of the Arctic Gateway Group shows indeed the way. One of its principal shareholders, Fairfax Financial invests in projects up north but is a small portion of its investment portfolio and possibly one major reason is the emptiness and lack of people, inhabitants and consumers living in the so called freezing lands up north. Which brings us to the other classic factor of production, labour.

Indeed, we are deficient in terms of people and labour. Our relatively small population holds us back. Our estimates indicate that in order to effectively and efficiently capitalize on the other

factors of production; Canada should reach at least the 70 million population threshold line. This size will increase our human pool, empower the ingenuity of our people, boost the productivity and utilize idle resources across the land up to all important arctic arc land - Yukon, Northwestern Territories, Nunavut and Labrador.

At the same time, with policies that encourage more births and especially with accelerating immigration we will manage to attract quality people to also help Canada's global expansion. Immigrants can be our global network, our bridges to secure inadequate and missing raw materials and goods, access new markets to sell our excess produce and exploit economies of scale into entering and penetrating international markets. For example, we do not have to train people to speak Hindi, know explicitly the local cultures in India, have a business network ready in place and minimize and/or avoid costs and expedite our learning curve. Canada during this century can exploit this parameter, due mainly to the level of education of our immigrants, globalization and technological means. Indeed, more population will geometrically increase our north and global expansion and concurrently will boost us technologically due to brain gain.

Resolute - the new Craigellache

Canada is also blessed as a transportation hub as well as a last energy resource country. In a couple of decades major shipping lines will cross our arctic seas and the Northwest passage will become a major, efficient and secure global shipping passage. We strategically established (but not adequately noticed and celebrated) the first link to Churchill, Manitoba at the Hudson Bay gulf. We will definitely see more north bound highways and railways in the years to come that will resemble our railway connectivity east-west during the 1800s. Federal and provincial governments should meticulously study and be motivated by Cartier and MacDonald's passion and commitment to east west railroad and apply the same passion for building south north railroads. Their dream "from sea to sea" had come true but the expansion "from the river to the ends of the earth" is an unfinished business up to now.

Previous generations had built the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), now we should strategically plan to build south-north (rail) lines, the new Canadian Arctic Railway (CAR). And at the same time a network port connectivity along the all-important northwest passage from Inuvik to Resolute to Iqaluit and to Happy Valley-Goose Bay. By doing so, we will control and boost global trading from the Bering strait to Davis strait via the so important and strategic Parry channel. In that respect, we fulfill the national motto: "from sea to sea to sea" ("A Mari Usque Ad Mare Ad Mare").

This port network along with the continuing ice melting and technological progress will also allow us to tap and exploit the last oil and gas reserves on our planet in the undersea zones in the Arctic melting archipelago (according to the US Geological Survey in 2008, the arctic contains an estimated 30 percent of the world's undiscovered natural gas and 13 percent of its undiscovered oil reserves). Completing these stages will bring us closer to an active and dynamic international position status with influential foreign policy that in turn will motivate us to build a noticed and strong Canadian army.