

What Does Citizenship Mean In A World Without Borders?
Sunday August 12, 2007
10:00am-12:00pm

76th Annual Couchiching Summer Conference

The world beyond our borders is already present in our daily lives. The presence will only increase. Borders are fluid, international networks are multiplying, dual citizenship is common – what rights and whose responsibilities do we bear, and to which country? In a world that has left behind the tidy era (or not so tidy) of nation-states and citizens of relatively fixed geographic and cultural identities, is anything constant anymore?

Pierre Pettigrew, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, as comfortable in Canada as he is in Europe or Latin America, and two young Canadians, Farouk Jiwa and Irvin Studin, whose own identities take on the question of citizenship in a global community are as “post-national” and “cosmopolitan” as they come, add their insights.

Speakers:

Pierre Pettigrew, Executive Advisor (International), Deloitte & Touche LLP

Irvin Studin, author, *What Is A Canadian?*

Farouk Shamas Jiwa, Global Youth Fellow, Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation

Moderator:

Drew Fagan, Assistant Deputy Minister (Strategic Policy and Planning), Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Introduction:

- ∞ Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.
- ∞ My presentation takes inspiration from two warmly reinforcing aspects of my life
 - My experience as a “young,” transnational immigrant to Canada
 - My work as a Global Youth Fellow with the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, through which I have been investigating, at a preliminary level, the relevancy of concepts such as multiculturalism, diversity, and the pluralism of identity for Canadian foreign policy.

The major points I am trying to stimulate debate on today are the following:

- ∞ First, Multiculturalism and diversity have important implications for Foreign Policy, and vice versa. This presents possible opportunities as well as challenges.
 - ∞ Second, the multiple identities and affiliations people have reason to value (which I will refer to as the *pluralism of identity*) may or may not offer something for foreign policy, and vice versa.
 - ∞ Finally, I will suggest some possible avenues for how could deal with the complexities that arise on these issues.
 - ∞ I should note that what I say today are my own views and thus do not reflect the views of the Government of Canada (the Department of Canadian Heritage), where I am formally employed, nor of the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation.
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Personal:

- ∞ Let me begin with a story. Those who know me, know that I like to share stories. I think in some respects this might also speak to the point raised yesterday morning's session on the opportunities of understanding between Aboriginal peoples and immigrants to this country.
- ∞ Last Spring my partner and I travelled to the geographic centre of Canada, Baker Lake, which is in Nunavut. In the short time we spent there, we came in touch with some of the real challenges the community in Baker Lake is facing: I remember being struck profoundly and personally by a connection I had with the people there, the land, situation of the community, the feel of the community.
- ∞ On the flight back down South, I was trying to make sense of this connection: it was clear to me that a big part of this connection was because of my own background, my own identity and diversity.
 - I was born, and grew up, in Africa (Tanzania, Kenya Zambia) to parents of Indian descent (one parent who was born in India, the other a third-generation "Indo-East African")
 - I am a Muslim
 - I have lived and studied abroad (Switzerland, the United States, the United Kingdom, etc.)
 - I have travelled extensively (Uganda, Malawi, France, South Africa, Zimbabwe, India, and Sweden)
 - In Canada, I have lived in Alberta, Québec, and Ontario, and have visited many other parts: (British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, PEI, New Brunswick, and Nunavut)
- ∞ It was also in this vein of examination that I chose to examine for my Fellowship, at a preliminary level, what if anything multiculturalism, diversity and the pluralism of identity means for our foreign policy.

Background:

- ∞ First, by way of some background, multiculturalism/ diversity in Canada, it seems to me, has been used to justify and/or inform some Canadian foreign policy roles. Some examples include:
 - Sharing our expertise on managing multi/diversity with others
 - Sharing expertise in federalism
 - Consultations with Diaspora groups on post-conflict reconstruction and security issues (e.g. Haiti and Muslims)
 - Strengthening trade relations and capturing markets (diaspora/Team Canada missions)
 - Representation on international institutions (e.g. *La Francophonie*, *Quebec at UNESCO*, *involvement of Aboriginal peoples Summit of the Americas*)

- ∞ To further understand the underlying motivations of these issues and gauge the opportunities and challenges associated with them, I interviewed leaders in journalism, academia, politics and government, civil society, and so forth, in Canada, the United Kingdom, and South Africa.
 - Today I will focus on my Canadian interviews

Findings and Themes: Multiculturalism and Diversity

- ∞ Generally speaking, many informants agreed that multiculturalism and diversity were and are important for Canadian foreign policy:
 - Why? Many people believed that this was true because FP is a means of defining and expressing what and who we are as a country and what are our national interests and values.
 - At the same time, however, some were not sure if there always was a direct relationship between multi/diversity and foreign policy, but there nevertheless there is some sort of relationship between the two, at least indirectly that is. Quebec and the Iraq war, our involvement in Haiti and the Ukraine as a result of these groups in Canada.

- ∞ In terms of some of the *opportunities* that multiculturalism and diversity offered for Canadian foreign policy
 - First, many people said that that in many respects we are already taking advantage of some one these opportunities. e.g. The role of Quebec at UNESCO, etc. consultations with diaspora groups etc
 - In fact, the diaspora or Canada and their transnational networks were seen as an advantage in other ways as well:
 - *The use of members of diaspora groups/transnational networks by tapping into the assets that diasporas bring: linguistic skills,*

knowledge of culture/country, religion, business contacts, etc.

- ∞ In terms of the potential *challenges* that multiculturalism and diversity presented for FP, there are three interrelated ones:
 - First, with the increase in bringing in people of diverse backgrounds, there is a perception that some of these multicultural groups will engage in illegitimate activities such as terrorism in Canada and/or be involved with this overseas. In some respects, some people spoke to the challenge of integration and ghettoization
 - Second, some felt that there was a risk that Canada's FP positions, as a result of lobbying or not, may instigate or exacerbate tension/conflict in Canada among communities.
 - E.g. The strong stance the current government took vis-à-vis the Israel-Lebanon situation last year (see as a result of the Jewish lobby)
 - Third, a feeling existed that that the lobbying efforts of diaspora groups' were actually derailing Canada's FP interests (note that I said *interests*, not values)
 - Furthermore, that our politicians often leveraged political advantage by acting on the appeals to diaspora groups
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Findings and Themes: Pluralism of Identity

- ∞ In asking people what they thought multiple identities and affiliations could potentially offer for FP, some interesting points came up as well:
- ∞ In terms of some of the *opportunities*, people noted the following:
 - First, some said that they liked the idea because it implied a FP seen through a "hospitality of difference" within Canada and outside of Canada. That is, as an international expression of our diversity that united us with the diversity inherent in the world.
 - Specifically, one person said: this was an idea that has the potential to take us into a universe that goes beyond seeing Canada as a rich, North American country of European stock, and which brought us into the realm of human rights.
- ∞ In terms of the potential *challenges* associated with the pluralism of identity and FP, the following were mentioned:
 - (1) It makes thinking about FP a hell of a lot more complicated. For instance, we have to think about not only a persons or a community's ethnic or religious background, we in fact have to think about how FP

would affect people or communities based on gender, sexuality, and so forth.

- (2) In a stream of multiple identities and affiliations, how do you find the ones that unite us as Canadians and could inform our FP.
- (3) Interestingly enough, it was when I asked about the pluralism of identity that the idea of dual citizenship came up. That is, thinking of things in terms of a pluralism of identity in this case legitimates one identity over another.
 - How therefore do you know when a Canadian chooses to be a Canadian when she or he lives in Hong Kong or Lebanon? (There is a loyalty issue/"Casual Canadians")
 - And what happens when someone who holds dual citizenship gets embroiled in difficulty or gets in trouble in the country of their other citizenship?

How do we try and make sense of all of this?:

- ∞ We have looked at the multi and diversities, and pluralism of identity, their opportunities and challenges, what how do we make sense of these?

Specifically on the issues of multi and diversity:

∞ *Multi and Diversity:*

- (1) Interesting to note: One of DFAIT's responses to the link between the Muslim community and FP: Muslim Working Group (done in good faith, no pun intended)
 - Brings up the question of the understanding of the complexities, dynamics, and diversity within the Muslim community? Would my voice as a Muslim from Kenya have the same consideration as a Muslim from Syria?
 - To what degree does this policy response actually create the potential for exacerbating stigmatization and discrimination, make a community feel they are under the microscope in Canada?
 - Are we looking in the right direction with this institutional response? Are there other things broadly speaking that would ingrain a sense of understanding cross-culturally, across religions, the space of dialogue.
- (2) Who gets access to lobby the government? Who represents who in the name of Haitian community? and why is this important?
 - Because much as we know depends on who has the time and wherewithal to be involved, that is who can care about FP?

∞ *On the issue of the Pluralism of Identity:*

- It does make it complicated. But perhaps it does enable us to continue to be sensitive to these differences in FP. E.g. one of the biggest lessons on the conduct of war, for instance, the experience and effects of war is dramatically different for men and women, and children...with of course, women and children disproportionately affected.
- Second, when we are developing FP and our engagement in different countries, can we take the challenges of multiculturalism and diversity at face value – black/white.Sunni/Shia. Not entirely, I think. E.g. in South Africa, the divisions were not only between black and white. One equally big challenge is that at the same time South Africans are wanting to reassert their African identity, a lot of South Africans are xenophobic against other Africans (CLASS).
- Third, when it comes to the issues of Dual citizenship: There are indeed some deep technical, diplomatic, and legal issues involved when “attachments” or “identities” conflict. E.g. There have been incidences when dual citizen Canadians travel and enter their other country of citizenship and when they get into trouble, or worse tortured or killed, leaves us with some real challenges.

∞ BUT WE SHOULD NOT lose sight of the economic and global opportunities that dual citizenship offers. We should not get lost in a debate about our where our loyalties lie. E.g. Lebanon - I think we need to ask ourselves if we would we have reacted the same way to Canadian in Western Europe as opposed to Lebanon? etc.

- Finally, let us not lose sight of the fact that our multiple identities connect us to the world beyond our border, a world that is in Canada today. What this suggests that through our connections internationally we come to appreciate, I would hope, how the opportunities and challenges that people outside our borders face are similar to ours, and vice versa, as well as our commonalities with others: E.g. how a woman in Canada may be able to understand and fight for the equality of women overseas. And, similarly, how a Mulsim woman from elsewhere can be a lawyer and fight for the rights of woman in Canada.
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So what, if anything are some practical things we can start to think about:

- ∞ Opening doors –
 - What I mean by this is that if there is a perception that some groups have access to decision-makers more than others, and that there is an inequality in this, then it implies that government must have structures in place to ensure that all voices get heard. And I mean that this should be available not only in times of developing our international policy agenda, but when those decisions and input is needed on a day to day basis.
 - In other words, as Tariq Ramadan said, there needs to be a *duty of consistency* in terms of access

- ∞ Second, *Structural Issues*: here I a talking about getting those diverse voices in the government, so recruitment etc., but also a dialogue between those make decisions on our foreign policy and those who work on immigration issues: That is, what are the real challenges/sentiments the multicultural communities in Canada are facing, on the ground so that we do not end up with ad hoc solutions to problems and understand those people and communities that seem to be in the orbit of FP. Without a question, in our quest for equality, it means enabling those who come to Canada to be in a position to take part in the foreign policy debates on an equal footing. And this means, that at the very least, they need jobs, they need opportunities to get involved, they need to be built into networks.

- ∞ Third, I think an argument can be made for *Education*:
 - Schools: If we can agree that our schools are the promoters and arbiters of our values, they are also the seats of learning about our neighbours, our solitudes. So this means not only giving an accurate picture about Canada's histories (conquest, colonialization, as Bob Watts pointed out) but also seeing the diversity of Canada reflected in those histories. I would also add in being cognizant of the international dimension of our education and moving beyond the Western, as Marie McAndrew pointed out.

- ∞ Fourth, *Civic and Global Engagement*: I mean sports fields, I mean investing in our communities in our neighbourhoods and across Canada so that we can engage with each other, getting communities connected with technology, and to invest in the power of individuals to make connections with the world outside of them. That is what creates loyalty. That is what creates the Canadian identity, by giving people the reasons to value being a Canadian amongst the many identity variables that we have.

Definitions

“Foreign policy” is taken to mean the actions, roles and expression of a country beyond its borders.

“Multiculturalism” refers to societies that are non-homogenous as a result of active immigration policies; For example, Canada is a “multicultural” society because of active immigration from non-traditional sources of immigrants since the 1960’s.

“Diversity” on the other hand describes societies that are non-homogenous as a result of active immigration policies but also more generally is a term that recognizes other key pillars that make that society non-homogenous (e.g. in Canada, our French/Quebec, British/ English, and First Nations/Aboriginal/Metis history).

Finally, “pluralism” refers to the many factors that make up an individual’s and/or collectivity’s identity beyond just race, colour, ethnicity etc. (e.g. pluralism = race, colour, ethnicity, religion + gender, political inclination, profession etc.)

For the sake of completeness, I define one other term: “identity”, which is intimately tied to the concepts above . “Identity” is taken to mean the facets of an individual and/or collectivity’s being that s/he (or the collectivity) has reason to value, whether this is colour, race, culture, language, gender, etc.