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To Jonathan Kaye's question what I think about the RepTrak™ poll which ranks Canada first in international reputation (National Post, September 28), I think it is great, although it would have carried more weight if the survey had covered more than just the G8 countries. The starting point of my book, "Getting Back in the Game", which Kaye evidently has not read past the title, is that Canada is a super country, widely respected for the successful society we have created over generations, for the protection we afford the rights of most of our citizens, for our near unique ability to harness diversity, for the strength of our economy, especially our financial system, for the excellence of our educational system and for the effective, constructive foreign policies of past governments. I cite a good dozen international polls, by Gallup and other highly regarded organizations to substantiate the point. I also cite other reputable polls with broader samples than RepTrak™, e.g., BBC/GlobeScan (2010) and WorldPublicOpinion.Org (2010), which find that recently our reputation has regrettably begun to retreat. The UN Security Council election last year, in which we were supported by 76 of 192 countries, constituted definitive evidence of what other

governments think of our foreign policy. And contrary to the wishful thinking of mini-Con apologists like Kaye, the majority of UN members, according to Freedom House, are democracies. We lost the election, not because of “a cynical EU seat grab” — there are 27 EU members; we lost by 52 -- but because our government’s contempt for the UN, which Kaye shares, showed, and because its policies had alienated many, especially its apparently unconditional support for a Netanyahu coalition in Israel that gives voice to extremist and religious fundamentalist parties, that is considered intransigent on Middle East peace by leaders as diverse as Bill Clinton, Bob Gates, Leon Panetta, Angela Merkel, Ehud Olmert and Tzipi Livni and that is progressively isolating Israel from much of the rest of the world. Nor has Ottawa evinced empathy with a Palestine people whose rights have been overridden by 44 years of illegal occupation. Kaye is right that I believe a fair-minded Canadian government should criticize intransigence on both sides. Further, Ottawa has disparaged the UN (prior to losing the election and, more disappointingly, since), obstructed climate change negotiations, done little on international arms control and mismanaged relations with Mexico, China, and the UAE.

The Harper government has had had its successes, including its conduct of the G20 in Toronto (leaving aside the extraordinary cost and attendant scandals), its handling of the earthquake in Haiti, its renewed emphasis on the Arctic, its emphasis on free trade negotiations, potentially its perimeter agreement with the US its refurbishment of the military, Canada's contributions to the fights in Afghanistan and Libya, among other things.

Unlike Kaye, I have the longitudinal perspective to know that we can do still better. Pearson's fingerprints are all over the creation of the post war global institutions, Trudeau got us into the G8, Mulroney negotiated the free trade, acid rain and Arctic passages agreements with the US, hosted the first climate change summit and led in the fights against Apartheid and for German unification, Chretien participated in the Kosovo war, engaged Canada in Afghanistan, kept Canada out of the catastrophic Iraq war and delivered the International Criminal Court, and Martin engineered the creation of the G20, potentially the biggest innovation in global governance in 60 years.

By the way, although you would never know it from Kaye's comments, I am not a political partisan, although I was Prime Minister Mulroney's chief foreign policy advisor for three years.

Also, I do not write primarily in the Globe and Mail, although doing so would trouble me less than it does Kaye.

Paul Heinbecker