



## KEYNOTE SPEECH BY JOHN TORY

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TO THE ROADMAP: 2030 DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE ([www.roadmap2030.com](http://www.roadmap2030.com));  
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2010

IT IS A PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SPEAK TO THIS CONFERENCE WHICH HAS BEEN CONVENED AT SUCH A STRATEGIC POINT IN OUR HISTORY.

WHILE I AM NOT GOING TO VENTURE TOO FAR INTO THE REALM OF MUNICIPAL POLITICS TODAY, I WILL SAY THAT IT HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTING TO SEE THAT THE DIALOGUE AND DEBATE HAVE BEEN LARGELY CONFINED THUS FAR TO IMPORTANT DISCUSSIONS ABOUT FIXING THE FINANCES AND COMPETING TRANSIT MAPS ( I DON'T REALLY THINK THEY CAN BE CALLED PLANS) BUT NOTHING MUCH BEYOND THAT.

AS A SOCIAL ISSUE, DIVERSITY GETS LITTLE MORE THAN LIP SERVICE, AN ISSUE IN RESPECT OF WHICH WE AREN'T YET HAVING AN HONEST DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FACT THAT NEWCOMERS, VISIBLE MINORITIES, DISABLED PEOPLE AND ABORIGINALS MAKE UP A HUGELY DISPROPORTIONATE PERCENTAGE OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN OUR PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS. EVEN THOSE PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS, WHICH TO ME REPRESENT IN THEIR TOTALITY THE BIGGEST SINGLE CHALLENGE THIS CITY FACES IN THE COMING YEARS, GET ONLY OCCASIONAL MENTION IN PASSING.

DIVERSITY AS AN ECONOMIC ISSUE GETS ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT OF NON-ATTENTION, NOTWITHSTANDING THE FACT THAT THE FUTURE HEALTH OF OUR ECONOMY IN THE GTA WILL LARGELY DETERMINE IF WE CAN IN FACT FIX OUR FINANCES **AND** MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OUR CIVIL SOCIETY, WHICH I THOUGHT WAS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CANADIAN DREAM.

JUST AS WE CAN STILL HEAR THE ECHOES OF THE PRAISE WE RECEIVED AS THE CLEANEST AND SAFEST BIG CITY IN THE WORLD, ONLY TO LET OUR STANDING SLIDE DOWN THOSE LISTS, I WORRY ABOUT AN IMPENDING CASE OF "DIVERSITY SATISFACTION ELBOW" AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE BACK PATTING WE ARE DOING WHEN IT COMES TO OUR HANDLING OF DIVERSITY.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE DOING BETTER THAN MANY, BUT COMPLACENCY IS RARELY THE ATTITUDE WHICH KEEPS YOU ON TOP AS A ROLE MODEL FOR THE WORLD.

I THINK WE HAVE BEEN SO BUSY RECITING TO OURSELVES WHAT AMOUNT TO SIMPLE FACTS—THAT THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE IN TORONTO BORN OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY THAN IN, THAT THE PERCENTAGE

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OF PEOPLE LIVING HERE WHO ARE FROM SO CALLED VISIBLE MINORITIES IS HIGHER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE—WE ARE SO BUSY REPEATING THOSE FACTS, THAT I AM AFRAID WE HAVE COME TO SEE THEM AS ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN AND OF THEMSELVES, AS OPPOSED TO JUST FACTS.

WHEN PEOPLE COMPLAIN TO ME ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE DEBATE IN THE CURRENT ELECTIONS, AND BELIEVE ME, I HEAR A LOT ABOUT IT AS I WALK DOWN THE STREET OR RIDE THE SUBWAY, THEY ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT THE FACT WE DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY GOALS WHICH LOOK BEYOND GETTING THE BOOKS BALANCED AND GETTING SOME TRANSIT BUILT( BOTH OF WHICH ARE ADMITTEDLY CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT), AND ASK OURSELVES WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE TO LIVE IN TORONTO IN 5 OR 10 YEARS, WHAT WILL THE EXPERIENCE BE, WHAT SHOULD IT BE, WHAT SHOULD THE CITY PHYSICALLY LOOK LIKE, HOW WILL WE BE LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER. NONE OF THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE ANSWERED WITHOUT CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF OUR DIVERSITY.

I GIVE MAYOR DAVID MILLER CREDIT. IN AT LEAST ONE AREA, THE ENVIRONMENT, HE SET OUT A GOAL WHICH WAS MEANT TO EXTEND BEYOND HIS OWN TIME IN OFFICE, AND WHICH DOES REQUIRE A REACH AND AN EFFORT TO GET THERE, NAMELY FOR OURS TO BE THE GREENEST CITY IN THE WORLD.

AND WHILE I HAVE MY ISSUES WITH SOME OF WHAT HE HAS DONE OR NOT DONE IN OTHER AREAS, I THINK THAT WITH THE ENVIRONMENT, WE HAVE ACHIEVED MORE, WE HAVE DONE BETTER, HE HAS DONE BETTER **BECAUSE** WE HAD AN AMBITIOUS GOAL THAT LOOKED BEYOND NEXT WEEK, THE NEXT ELECTION OR THE NEXT AUDIT.

AND SO WHILE IT IS A FACT THAT WE ARE LIKELY THE MOST DIVERSE CITY REGION ON THE PLANET, DOESN'T REAL LEADERSHIP, A REAL SENSE OF DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE REQUIRE US TO SET AS A GOAL TO BE, SAY, THE FAIREST CITY ON EARTH, THE ONE WHICH OFFERS THE MOST GENUINE, TANGIBLE EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY, THE ONE WHICH IS DOING THE BEST JOB IN ALL THE WORLD OF ENSURING THAT ITS LEADERSHIP RANKS REPRESENT ALL OF ITS PEOPLE?

I THINK IT BEGINS WITH AN UNQUALIFIED, ACROSS THE BOARD BUY- IN TO THE CONCEPT OF EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY. TO ME THAT COMMITMENT IS NOT ABOUT QUOTAS OR LAWS BUT RATHER ITS ABOUT GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, LABOUR AND THE NON PROFIT SECTOR ACKNOWLEDGING THAT AT PRESENT, WE AREN'T MAKING IT ANY EASIER FOR PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS TO **FIND** OPPORTUNITY, ESPECIALLY CAREER OPPORTUNITY, LET ALONE CAPITALIZE ON IT.

AGAIN IF WE ARE HONEST, WE WOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PEOPLE WHOSE FAMILIES HAVE BEEN HERE FOR 6 GENERATIONS , EVEN THEY WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY NAVIGATING THE LANDSCAPE TO HELP THEIR KIDS FIND A JOB. IMAGINE IF YOU HAD BEEN HERE 5 YEARS, CAME WITH A MOTHER TONGUE OTHER THAN ENGLISH , AND SETTLED IN ONE OF OUR PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS AS SO MANY



NEWCOMERS INITIALLY DO. HOW EASY ARE THOSE FELLOW CITIZENS FINDING IT TO ACCESS OPPORTUNITY?

THREE SHORT STORIES THAT ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT NOT BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW IT, BUT BECAUSE WE NEED TO BE REMINDED OF HOW IT PRESENTS ITSELF.

A RECENT IMMIGRANT TO TORONTO WITH YEARS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES EXPERIENCE SEES A JOB POSTING AND SENDS HIS RESUME IN TO ONE OF OUR MAJOR CORPORATIONS ON LINE. HEARING NOTHING AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS, HE DECIDES THAT HIS QUALIFICATIONS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH AND SUCCESSFULLY TAKES THE SECURITIES COURSE. HE RESUBMITS HIS RESUME AND STILL HEARS NOTHING. SO HE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES THE CHARTERED FINANCIAL ANALYST COURSE AND RESUBMITS. STILL NOTHING. SHORTLY AFTER, BY CHANCE, HE HEARS OF A JOB FAIR IN REGENT PARK WHERE HE WAS LIVING, GOES THERE, PRESENTS HIS RESUME AND IS VIRTUALLY HIRED ON THE SPOT BY THE SAME ORGANIZATION HE HAD BEEN SENDING HIS RESUME TO ON LINE. IT JUST TOOK SOMEONE ACTUALLY READING HIS INCREDIBLE CREDENTIALS.

STORY TWO. CAREER BRIDGE, AN ORGANIZATION I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO HELP BY RECRUITING BUSINESSES TO OFFER INTERNSHIPS TO SKILLED IMMIGRANTS. 90 PER CENT OF THOSE INTERNS, GIVEN 4 MONTHS TO SHOW WHAT THEY CAN DO, GET FULL TIME JOBS. I CAN REMEMBER GETTING THE CALLS FROM THOSE EMPLOYERS EXPRESSING AMAZEMENT AT THE QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE PEOPLE WE SENT THEM. THEY JUST NEEDED A CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT THEY COULD DO.

STORY THREE; I TOOK A GROUP OF KIDS TO LUNCH FROM A SUMMER DAY CAMP IN JANE FINCH WHICH I HAVE BEEN HELPING FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. BEYOND WATCHING THEM DEAL WITH THE BUFFET AT THE MANDARIN, WHICH IS WHERE THEY WANTED TO GO, I WAS ONCE AGAIN EXPOSED TO THE FACT THAT THESE KIDS ARE AS BRIGHT, AS EAGER, AS FILLED WITH HOPE AND AMBITION AS ANY OTHERS... THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEM BEING BLACK OR BROWN SKINNED, SECOND GENERATION CANADIANS WHO WILL NEED SOME EXTRA TOOLS TO HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

IN EACH CASE, THE NEEDS WE ARE NOT MEETING ARE QUITE OBVIOUS, THE LACK OF ANY KIND OF A CO-ORDINATED, BROADLY BASED ACTION PLAN EQUALLY OBVIOUS, AND WITHOUT OVERSIMPLIFYING, THESE EXAMPLES AND MANY OTHERS TELL ME WE NEED SINCERE, CONSISTENT CO-OPERATIVE LEADERSHIP FROM OUR GOVERNMENTS (PLURAL), MUCH GREATER ENGAGEMENT ON THE PART OF BUSINESS (OUR FAULT NOT THEIRS), DIFFERENT TOOLS FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS, WHETHER IT BE THE DISABLED, YOUNG BLACK KIDS OR ABORIGINALS, AND A MUCH EARLIER START FOR THE CHILDREN OF OUR DIVERSE POPULATIONS, FAMILIES WHERE THE PARENTS MAY ALREADY HAVE SLIPPED BETWEEN THE CRACKS.

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I BELIEVE THIS STARTS WITH LEADERS, PEOPLE LIKE US, MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE TO THOSE IN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND ELSEWHERE AS TO WHY DOING THIS JUST MAKES GOOD SENSE, PUTTING ASIDE SOMETHING CALLED 'DOING THE RIGHT THING' WHICH I WILL RETURN TO AT THE END.

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF BUSINESS, COMPANIES ARE MISSING OUT ON SOME OF THE VERY BEST AND BRIGHTEST CANADA HAS TO OFFER BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT TAKE THEIR NEEDS TO PLACES LIKE THAT JOB FAIR IN REGENT PARK, BECAUSE THEY AREN'T SIGNING UP FOR CAREER BRIDGE OR GETTING INVOLVED IN FORGING SPECIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE IN OUR PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS AS HAS SUCCESSFULLY BEEN DONE BY COMPANIES SUCH AS RBC AND IBM.

WE NEED TO GET BUSINESS GENERALLY ON BOARD NOW AND TO MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO HELP SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES WHICH DON'T HAVE BIG H.R. DEPARTMENTS TO OVERSEE THESE ACTIVITIES.

BUSINESS IS MISSING THE BOAT ON THE HUGE INTERNATIONAL VALUE OF OUR DIVERSITY AT HOME. GREAT AS WE ARE, WE ONLY HAVE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES VIS A VIS OTHER COUNTRIES COMPETING WITH US FOR EXPORT SALES. ONE OF THEM IS OUR DIVERSITY AND THE CONNECTIONS THAT OFFERS US TO EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.

WE ARE MISSING OUT ON THE PROVEN CONNECTION BETWEEN DIVERSITY AND BUSINESS SUCCESS. STUDY AFTER STUDY SHOWS COMPANIES WHICH ENSURE BETTER REPRESENTATION OF OUR DIVERSE POPULATION IN DECISION MAKING BODIES AND POSITIONS, HAVE GREATER RECORDS OF INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, BETTER DECISION MAKING AND SUPERIOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS. IT STANDS TO REASON IF YOU PUT THE VERY BEST AND BRIGHTEST IN PLACE WITH WIDELY VARYING BACKGROUNDS AND EXPERIENCES YOU WILL GET MORE OF THE IDEAS THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE FOR US.

AND FINALLY , THE CUSTOMERS. OUR CONSUMER AND BUSINESS MARKET S ARE DIVERSE. THAT IS A FACT. IN 2001 IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT VISIBLE MINORITIES HAD \$78 BILLION IN PURCHASING POWER....ITS GOOD FOR BUSINESS TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS LIKE THAT AND HOW BETTER THAN TO HAVE PEOPLE IN KEY POSITIONS ON OUR LEADERSHIP TEAMS WHO ARE THEMSELVES PART OF THAT REALITY.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GOVERNMENT IS EVEN SIMPLER I BELIEVE, AGAIN LEAVING ASIDE THE CRUCIAL MATTER OF DOING THE RIGHT THING. FOR GOVERNMENTS, THERE IS A TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE. INCREASED GOVERNMENT REVENUES FROM INCREASED INCOMES EARNED BY THOSE WHO ARE PRESENTLY UNDEREMPLOYED. DECREASED SOCIAL ASSISTANCE COSTS AS THE VERY SAME PEOPLE EMERGE WITH STABLE PRODUCTIVE CAREERS. AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE DID WHAT WE AS CANADIANS SEE AS BEING RIGHT, NOT TO GIVE A HANDOUT BUT A HANDUP, BY GIVING EVERY

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CANADIAN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW WHAT THEY CAN DO, EVEN IF THAT MEANS A TOOLBOX UNIQUE TO THE NEEDS OF EACH OF OUR DIVERSE POPULATIONS.

THIS ALL SOUNDS FAIRLY ROUTINE, NOT MUCH MAGIC OR TOO MANY EARTHSHAKING IDEAS, BUT THE FACT IS WE'RE NOT DOING THESE THINGS. WE JUST HAVEN'T SEEN THE DETERMINED, DISCIPLINED, UNITED, ACCOUNTABLE CRUSADE TO MAKE THE BUSINESS CASE, AND THEN GIVEN HOW OBVIOUS IT IS, TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE ACT ON IT.

I THINK IT BEGINS WITH MAKING THE COMMITMENT. WHETHER IT IS A DECLARATION THAT WE WANT TO ASPIRE TO BE THE FAIREST CITY IN THE WORLD BY MEASUREABLE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY, OR THE BEST AT INTEGRATING NEWCOMERS OR THE BEST AT ENSURING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR DISABLED CITIZENS, REAL LEADERSHIP IS NEEDED FROM THOSE WITH THE RESOURCES TO DO SOMETHING AND THE COMMITMENT TO SEEING IT THROUGH.

I THINK OUR MANNER OF CONSULTING HAS TO BE REFORMED. MANY OF THOSE WE SEEK OUT THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRES, MARKET RESEARCH OR VIA OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM NEVER END UP GETTING ASKED ANYTHING BY ANYBODY. IF YOU ARE A TAMIL SPEAKING WOMAN LIVING IN THORNCLIFFE PARK ARE YOU LIKELY TO HAVE A CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH SOMEONE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO DIVERSITY—HOW TO BRING JOBS TO THE PEOPLE? NOT LIKELY. ARE YOU ANYMORE LIKELY TO ANSWER THE PHONE AND DO AN ENGLISH PHONE SURVEY. I DON'T THINK SO. WOULD YOU BE RUSHING OUT TO A PUBLIC MEETING. UNLIKELY.

GOVERNMENTS HAVE TO START WORKING TOGETHER, TRUSTING ONE (OFTEN A DIFFERENT ONE) TO TAKE THE LEAD ROLE AND THE OTHERS GET OUT OF THE WAY. THE LEFT HAND MUST KNOW WHAT THE RIGHT HAND IS DOING.

A LOT OF THIS IS ABOUT LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT AND A RECOGNITION THAT PURE SELF INTEREST MAKES ENSURING OPPORTUNITY FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS A HUGE IMPORTANT PRIORITY TO ADDRESS.

BUT THERE ARE TWO OTHER EQUALLY POWERFUL REASONS TO STOP THE BACK PATTING, TO ACT AND TO ACT NOW.

THE FIRST IS PERHAPS A BIT MORE DEFENSIVE BUT HONESTY REQUIRES IT TO BE MENTIONED. IF WE ALLOW THE EMERGENCE OF TWO OR THREE OR TEN SOLITUDES IN THE GTA, WHERE OUR FELLOW CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES, OUR NEWCOMERS OR OUR ABORIGINAL CITIZENS LOSE HOPE, THE RESULTING FRUSTRATIONS WOULD LIKELY LEAD TO CONSEQUENCES NONE OF US WOULD WANT TO CONSIDER, AND THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON FOR THAT IN A CITY AND COUNTRY AS FORTUNATE AS OURS.

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THE SECOND IS PERHAPS HARDER TO GET PRACTICAL HEADS AROUND, BUT IT ARISES FROM OUR VALUES. WE HAVE BEEN ENRICHED AS A COUNTRY AND AS A PEOPLE BY THE ARRIVAL OF PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. BUT THEY HAVE ARRIVED TO A PRE-EXISTING SET OF CORE VALUES WHICH MADE US CANADIANS AND WHILE GENERATIONS OF NEWCOMERS WILL HELP US IN SEEING THOSE VALUES EVOLVE AS TIMES CHANGE, THOSE ORIGINAL VALUES REMAIN THE CORE VALUES ON WHICH CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP IS GROUNDED.

ONE OF THOSE SURELY MUST BE THAT WE DON'T JUST LET PEOPLE FALL BETWEEN THE CRACKS. WE MAKE SURE PEOPLE GET A HAND UP WHEN THEY ARE STRUGGLING AND THAT WE GIVE **EVERYONE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION,** A CHANCE TO SHOW WHAT THEY CAN DO.

AND SO, BRINGING AN END TO THE COMPLACENT BACKPATting, COMITTING OURSELVES TO THE CRUSADE FOR EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY, FULLY ENGAGING BUSINESS , LABOUR AND THE NON PROFIT COMMUNITIES, WORKING TOGETHER FOR ONCE, BEING PREPARED TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR REAL RESULTS---THESE ARE ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR LONG HELD AND DEEPLY CHERISHED CANADIAN VALUES, AND THEREFORE ALSO, THEY REPRESENT THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

NOTWITHSTANDING SOME SETBACKS I HAD IN PUBLIC LIFE, I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE YOU CAN NEVER GO WRONG DOING THE RIGHT THING. AND THAT IS WHY I WILL CONTINUE TO DEVOTE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT TO WORKING WITH YOU TO ADVANCE THIS HIGH PRIORITY CAUSE IN A MEANINGFUL, MEASUREABLE WAY NOT STATRting TOMORROW, BUT STARTING TODAY.

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