

Notes for a Statement by Paul Heinbecker

At the Memorial for

Attila Altikat

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Check Against Delivery

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We are here to commemorate Attila Altikat, a young, bright, personable and promising Turkish diplomat, who was brutally murdered on this spot by Armenian terrorists 26 years ago.

Attila was a family friend, as well as a diplomatic colleague.

My wife, Ayse, was friends with Attila's wife, Ayla.

My daughter, Celine, played with Attila's son, Goker, in our home, and theirs.

The week before the assassination we, and others, had all been together for a picnic at Jim Puddington's father's place.

That was the last time I saw Attila alive; a few days later he was dead, at the hands of terrorists.

Sadly, Attila was not the first Turkish diplomat attacked in Ottawa.

Kani Gungor had been attacked earlier that year and left almost completely paralyzed.

Nor was Attila the last.

The Turkish Embassy was also attacked in 1985.

Claude Brunelle, a young Canadian security guard at the Embassy, a student from the University of Ottawa, was killed in the attack.

The Ambassador was seriously hurt and spent months in hospital.

His family and embassy staff were terrorized.

Nor were the Turks the only diplomats to be attacked in Ottawa—Yugoslavs and Indians were also attacked.

And diplomats were not the only targets of terrorists.

On June 2, 1985, Air India flight 182 was bombed by a Sikh separatist group.

329 people, including 280 Canadians were killed, in the worst terrorist crime in Canadian history.

Like Attila's murder, justice has never been done in this case.

There is a common thread running through these tragedies:

The unwritten contract with Canada was broken in each case.

That contract holds that people from every corner of the world, from every ethnic group, from all faiths, and no faiths, are welcome to join in the building of Canada,

Provided they leave violence behind.

Canada cannot survive as a multicultural, diversity-valuing society if national, ethnic or religious groups import their conflicts into Canada.

Nor does it mean that anyone has a right to ask immigrants or their offspring to forget where they or their families came from.

Or to take no interest in what happens in their former homelands.

But it does mean that they should, also, respect Canada and what it stands for.

And leave the violence behind.

None of this means that terrorism is an exclusively imported phenomenon.

We have seen it in Quebec with the FLQ, where the terrorism was home-grown.

And we may have narrowly averted it in Toronto last year with the alleged plot of the Toronto 11.

Wherever it originates, however it is portrayed, whatever its claimed justification, whoever its perpetrators, terrorism is always wrong.

A further point to make on this occasion.

Public peace is not guaranteed in Canada, any more than it is anywhere else.

Peace, order and good government is not a gift bestowed uniquely on Canadians by our Constitution.

It is the creation of an enlightened society, in which people recognize its fragility and consciously work at living with one another.

No one in this country, no citizen, no NGO leader, no journalist, no elected politician, is ever justified in playing Diaspora politics, in driving political wedges

- **between the Jews and the Arabs,**
- **between the Tamils and the Sinhalese,**
- **between the Bosnians and the Croats and the Serbs,**
- **or between the Turks and the Armenians.**

Diaspora politics is the tinder of a fire that would burn not just those who ignited it.

We are here to remember Attila Altikat and Claude Brunelle and Kani Gungor and all the innocent who have been harmed by terrorism in this country,

But, as important as remembrance is, we need also to do more than remember.

We need to resolve never to turn a blind eye to extremists in our own communities,

And always to hold our elected officials accountable, and ourselves.

“Peace, order and good government” must never be seen as just an aspiration,

But as the right of everyone in this country.

And the responsibility.

