

**50 + years: Canada and Peacekeeping  
Organization for the History of Canada**

**Canadian War Museum**

**Notes for a Keynote Speech**

**“Everything Old Is New Again”**

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**Check Against Delivery**

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## **Introduction**

**This conference is on peacekeeping history, evolutions and perceptions**

**I will focus on the “perceptions” part from the perspective of my days as a former UN Ambassador and Political Director.**

**I will also suggest some do's and don'ts  
to the still new government**

**Assertions, not argumentation, on  
five points**

**Five points:**

**1. The Peace Keeping versus  
Peacemaking Debate is a Fallacy:**

- **But Will Canadians Support Wars  
of Choice?**

**2. The Peacekeeping Debate in Canada is  
a Proxy for the Real Issue, i.e.,**

- **Who Should Decide on Wars, the  
UN or the US?**

- **And who should run them?**

**3. The War on Terror- Is it the Real Thing or a Metaphor?**

**4. The UN and NATO; Neither Is Out-of-Date but neither is Up-to-Speed**

**5. Canada has a major interest in effective military operations abroad, in whatever format, and can and should give itself the capacity to play a significant part**

**Argumentation**

**I. The Peace Keeping versus  
Peacemaking Debate is a Fallacy: But  
Will Canadians Support Wars of  
Choice?**

**1. Peacekeeping isn't what it used to  
be;**

- **missions are much more  
numerous since the end of the cold war**

- **Currently, UN is directing 18  
operations comprising 87,000 troops,  
police and civilians**

- **Up from 12,700 in 1995**

- **Missions are much more complex than, e.g., Cyprus or the Sinai were**
- **Support to fragile peace agreements**
- **Support of elections**
- **Disarming combatants**
- **Protection of civilians**
- **More volatile regions, more dangerous (but the Congo),**
- **107 countries are contributing but heavy lifting by Third World**

- **Canada currently ranks 50<sup>th</sup>**
  - **Even when Afghanistan is counted, we are probably not in the top 10**
  
- **Some countries are motivated by the money (\$1,000 plus per head)**
  
- **But most do it for the influence it gives them and because they believe it is important**

**2. PK wasn't what it used to be, either**

- **Lots of romanticism and re-written history**

- **Peace keeping has always been dangerous**

- **107 posthumous medals for Canadians who died in the service of the UN**

- **Also, first civilian protection mandate in Res/1270 only in 1999 on Sierra Leone,**

- **protection of women and children mandate also only since 1999**

**3. The peacekeeping versus combat fallacy**



- **From a soldier's perspective, what would the difference be between Afghanistan and Darfur?**

- **Potentially equally bloody**

**4. Afghanistan, why are we in Afghanistan?**

- **Good Canadian reasons**

- **National security**

- **Nukes, terrorism**

- **Human security**

- **Operation Enduring Freedom is UN- recognized, if not fully UN-authorized**

- **But not just to please Washington, whose agenda goes far beyond our own (see below)**
  
- **The three D's as innovation**
  - **security before all**
  - **but will it work?**

#### **5. Darfur, why aren't we there?**

- **We have been doing more than many**
  - **Diplomacy by Rock, Angell, Fowler and Dallaire**
  
  - **Military planners, etc.**
  
  - **Equipment for the AU forces**
  
- **Good, but more is needed**

- **AU has not been able to stop the violence**
  
- **Western boots on the ground are needed**
  
- **The Prime Minister was right not to foreclose this option**
  
- **Canadian army involvement at the level of a battalion would serve our interests**
  - **In seeing this source of instability stabilized (Osama operated from the Sudan)**

- **In bolstering the UN**
- **An effective UN is in Canada's strategic interests**
- **Washington would be happy**
- **Our standing internationally would be reinforced**
- **Canadian involvement would be consistent with our values**

**6. But both are wars of choice, unlike WWI and WWII**

- **Remains to be seen how much Canadians will support wars of choice**

## **II. The Peacekeeping Debate in Canada is a Proxy for the Real Argument,**

- **i.e., Who Should Decide on Wars, the UN or the US?**
  - **Afghanistan was legal**
  - **Iraq was illegal**
- **Also, who should run those wars?**
- **For Canada, a US led coalition presents a serious trade off—**
  - **military effectiveness versus political liability**

- **The benefits of working with the US in coalitions, and NATO, include:**
  - **More transparency than in the UNSC**
  - **National contingents are not restricted in their equipment or numbers**
  - **Military effectiveness is higher**
  - **Medical care for the wounded is better**
- **But US foreign policy has become a major liability for potential partners of the US**

**Pew Polling**

- **Hostility and suspicion in Europe, the Middle East and Asia shows modest improvement since 2003 but is still very negative.**

- **And the opinion others hold of the American people is not as positive as it once was.**

- **Solid majorities in the predominantly Muslim countries surveyed express unfavorable views of the United States.**

- **Public opinion aside, there are problems with US foreign policy that make life awkward for allies**

- **US National Security Strategy**

- **Pre-emption versus prevention**
  
- **Attacking Iran now would be illegal**
  
- **Is Canada ready, politically, for a war on Iran this summer?**
  
- **Preserving dominance**
  - **\$500 billion**
  
  - **Does so much buy security?**
  
- **To paraphrase Andrew Bacevich of Boston University, a Vietnam veteran and the author of “The Militarization of America”,**



- **“when it comes to funding diplomacy and foreign aid, parsimony reigns”.**
  
- **But Indonesia**
  - **For all the budget, paradoxically, Iraq has revealed US is not omnipotent**
  
  - **Preferring former US policy is not anti-Americanism**

### **III. The War on Terror- the Real Thing or a Metaphor?**

- **For American administration, the real thing**

- **For most of the rest of the world, its just a metaphor**

- **A war on a tactic**

- **Osama might want the return of the Caliphate, but how likely is that?**

- **In any case, there is no international consensus on the threat, including the priority of the terrorist threat**

- **Danger and vulnerability look different if you live in Kandahar or Copenhagen, or Nyala, Najaf or Nablus -- or New York,**

- **Small arms and light weapons killed at least 300,000 people in 2004, predominantly in the poorer countries.**
  
- **Pregnancy-related causes killed more than 500,000 women, 99% of them in the Third World.**
  
- **HIV-AIDS killed more than three million people last year, again overwhelmingly in the Third World,**
  
- **natural disasters killed 244,500 people last year, the vast majority in poorer countries.**
  
- **It is not surprising that people in the poorer countries regard terrorism,**

- **especially terrorism directed at rich countries, as a secondary priority to them, at best.**

- **[[Nor is there much international consensus on what to do about terrorism**

- **Disaggregation of terrorism is more effective than conflation**

- **Terrorist motivations range from:**

- **overthrowing the international system (radical Islamists),**

- **to creating a state theocracy,**

- **to overthrowing a given government,**
  - **to secession from an existing state,**
  - **to resisting occupation,**
  - **to changing a social order, and beyond.**
- **Conflating groups with disparate motives diminishes consensus and jeopardizes international and domestic support**
    - **by bringing all manner of legitimate and illegitimate counter-terrorism purposes under one banner.**

- **Police cooperation, intelligence sharing and, ultimately, but only ultimately, military power are indispensable**
  
- **but there is also an equal need to drain grievance of its power and that offer alternatives to militancy.**
  
- **But considering the diversity and complexity of root causes, it is not surprising that governments have reached for their hammers.**
  
- **the “root causes” include:**
  - **poverty and falling standards of living in the Muslim world;**

- **young male unemployment in the Middle East and South Asia**
- **the pervasiveness of globalization and the encroachment of Western values, culture and power;**
- **extremist religious ideologies based on radical interpretations of Islam;**
- **weak, failing or failed states;**
- **repressive regimes;**
- **unresolved conflicts, particularly the Israel-Palestine conflict, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Chechnya;**

- **Western foreign policies whose default position is support for Israel and for undemocratic Arab regimes.**
- **Western domestic policies that marginalize Muslims (especially in Western Europe) ]]**

#### **IV. The UN and NATO; Neither is Out of Date but neither is up to scratch,**

- **Both are transforming themselves, or trying to**
  - **despite scarce consensus on threats**
- **The UN, Brahimi and DPKO**



- **UN much more effective manager than it used to be**
  
- **Canada chairs the Special Committee on Peacekeeping operations**
  
- **The UN has problems but much better than UN-bashers admit**

**International law**

**Norm against aggression**

**Human rights**

**Humanitarian law**

**Peacebuilding**

- **NATO, Rumsfeld and transformation**
  - **Scarce consensus inside alliance**
  - **NATO members say “yes” at NATO and do “no” at home**
  
- **Time for a re-think of the roles of major powers?**
  
- **Used to be conventional wisdom that major powers did not do peacekeeping**

○ **—too complicated and even dangerous when they did so**

• **Now we rely implicitly on the US**

• **Unfair and unnecessary**

• **Burden-sharing would be equally welcome in Washington and New York**

• **Perhaps we need either to get back to Blue Helmeted missions, or to coalitions in which the US does not lead**

○ **Australia and East Timor**

○ **But Eastern Zaire**

## **V. What the Government can/should do**

- 1. Do support the transformation of our forces so they can carry out modern complex operations**
- 2. Do give them the numbers that permit them to do more than one operation at once and do give them the equipment to perform at a world class level**
- 3. Do not forget the contribution to security that diplomacy and foreign aid make**

**4. Do not forsake the UN peacekeeping missions**

**5. Do help to relieve the US of the burden of international operations**

**6. Do take care not to be drawn into a deputy sheriff role**

**7. Do cooperate closely with the US on North American defence**

**8. Do not shrink from agreeing with the Americans when they are right**

**9. Do not shrink from standing aside  
when they are wrong**

**10. Do maintain a made-in-Canada  
foreign policy**