

**Notes from an Address**  
**by Paul Heinbecker\***  
**to the**  
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**Canada, the US, the UN and What It All Means**

**(Check against delivery)**

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I suspect my views on the Iraq war are well enough known in this crowd, so I won't risk boring people by repeating them. If any one wants to debate the soundness of the Canadian decision not to go to war on Iraq, I will be glad to accommodate them. What I thought I would try to reflect on, rather, is the bigger picture.

What kind of world are we bequeathing to our children? And, to the extent that Canada can do anything about it, what is it we should do?

I am going to beg your indulgence and talk mainly about the world of governments, rather than of corporations, or civil society, or just plain people. I realize that that is a bit like Macbeth without the ghosts, but you asked for a talk, not a book, and anyway I know more about governments, which are likely to remain the entities with potentially the greatest capacity to do both good and harm to us all. I am also going to talk more about security than economics but I will get at economics indirectly, via third world poverty and multilateral reform. Nor do I want to guess what the incalculable electoral permutations and combinations in Canada and the US might mean, although I have my own preferred outcomes on both sides of the border.

### What Kind of world?

First, what kind of world is it? At the moment, a profoundly divided one, which is likely to remain divided a long time. There is very little international agreement on what the most important issues are today, much less on how to resolve them. Most fundamentally, I see no common perception of a threat, including particularly as regards terrorism.

Outside the United States, and possibly Israel, I find very few people who see terrorism as the sort of existential threat that warrants the same kind of mobilization that Soviet Communism did or Chinese fascho-communism might, in a generation's time. And to the extent that there is agreement that Islamic terrorists are a threat, the threat is seen more in terms of economic consequences and individual security than of national security.

There is correspondingly little or no agreement in the world on how to respond. I personally do not believe that the US crusade in the Middle East must necessarily morph into a war between the West and Islam. Although I believe that that is probably the single biggest danger that Canada faces. And that we should do nothing to lend credence to its inevitability. There are 1.2 billion Moslems world-wide. Islam seems to be the fastest growing religion everywhere, not counting some of the more fundamentalist Christian faiths in Central America and West Africa, and perhaps elsewhere, including the United States. If US Middle Eastern policy radicalized just one Moslem in a thousand that creates potentially 1,200,000 terrorists. In an age of asymmetric warfare, a war with Islam is one that sane people, on either side, will not provoke. All the technology in the world and all the travel controls and human rights restrictions imaginable are not going to make it safe for Americans and their allies to walk down the street anywhere in the world.

Looking further down the road, it seems probable that China and India will emerge as major powers, and possibly Brazil. One of the more fascinating things to watch as time goes by will be whether Chinese uniformity will be more consequential than Indian diversity, assuming China can reconcile its ideological contradictions and India can remain whole. Meanwhile, Japan's troubles are not forever and neither are Russia's. The Korean peninsula confrontation and the South Asian nuclear standoff continue, with only episodic UN Security Council engagement. The number of interstate conflicts has declined in recent years, but the proportion of intrastate conflicts has increased. It is these conflicts on which the international community has most egregiously failed and it is here that the contradictions inherent in the UN Charter itself have become a central issue, as I will discuss later.

Economically and socially, the world is polarized between rich country and poor, over the contributing factors to the all pervasive issue of poverty and how to remedy it. Globalization, at once a cause and a cure, has generated great wealth and considerable disparity both within and between countries and revealed how inadequate existing institutions are. The international community is not on track to achieve the economic and social goals leaders set themselves at the Millennium Summit in New York at the UN in September 2000. These goals, which have also been endorsed and integrated into the plans of the World Bank, regional banks and the IMF, are presumably achievable, or we would not have all accepted them. But, rich and poor governments, international organizations, business, and civil society organizations, all get a failing grade in the effort to meet the voluntarily chosen targets.

Meanwhile, the problems of the commons, so long ago identified, remain intractable, with fish stocks depleting, forests retreating, deserts advancing and the climate changing, whether because of people or in spite of them.

### It's the Foreign Policy, Stupid!

The US, whose domestic exercise of power is governed by a system of checks and balances, progressively came to realize after the demise of the Soviet Union that internationally its power no longer faced check or balance. American will and capacity for international leadership continued unabated at a time when others, particularly other industrialized countries, were content to see Washington lead if it wanted to, in part because of the US's sheer capacity to do so, in part because they saw (and still see) no international threat to themselves or, more ignobly, no obligation to others requiring heavy investments in military capability. They preferred to spend their money and effort on domestic programme needs where political returns were more assured. As a consequence of the leadership role that others readily conceded to the US, and because of the considerable costs and risks of its self-appointed mission to propagate democracy, many in Washington on both sides of the political aisle came increasingly to see the US as bearing a disproportionate burden and, therefore, meriting exceptional dispensations from international law and norms.

The notion of America-as-exceptional dates from the Puritan migration and has ebbed and flowed in the American psyche ever since. De Tocqueville observed it in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America and Margaret MacMillan discerned it in US attitudes at the Paris peace talks of 1919. Nevertheless, US Aexceptionalism" was given modern currency in the 1980's when President Ronald Reagan borrowed from the Bible for his favoured portrayal of the United States as the Ashining city on a hill", the standard bearer of democracy. As Harold Koh of Yale, a former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has written, American "exceptionalism" unquestionably has its positive as well as its negative characteristics. The US has exercised exceptional leadership, for

example, in the development of post-war institutions, in the promotion of human rights and the development of international law and in the preservation of stability, particularly among Japan, China and Russia in North-East Asia. (It is also the case that from Iran in the fifties, to Vietnam in the sixties, to Chile in the seventies, to Iraq in the eighties, the US has chalked up some major errors.) It is the more self-serving expressions of exceptionalism, however, that have, *inter alia*, led to an American questioning of the applicability of the UN Charter, indeed of international law writ large, to the United States, alienating many others.

It, has, also, progressively eroded the equality principle that most UN members consider integral to such democratic character as the UN Charter has, much as the legal equality of American states is integral to the US Constitution, even if in both cases actual power correlations are otherwise. US abuse of the UN Security Council and the Charter, itself, in its opposition to the International Criminal Court, was seen by many as exceptionalism taken to extreme lengths, an unapologetic example of the US seeking one law for the goose and another for the gander.

It was not always thus. At the end of the Second World War, when the US bestrode the world even more colossally than it does today, President Truman told the assembled UN delegates in San Francisco that A[w]e all have to recognize that no matter how great our strength, we must deny ourselves the license to do always as we please. Now, many in the US seem to expect to lead, not by example, but by exception. US righteousness and supremacy are taken for granted in the US. I have lost track of the number of times I have read that the US is the greatest democracy, that the US has the best judicial system in the world, that the New York police are the best in the world, etc.

When I was a kid growing up in Southern Ontario, we used to think such talk was just harmless Yankee exaggeration but the problem is that some important Americans seem to believe it and see really little point debating anything with anyone else. 9/11 did not “change everything” but it did change some things, especially in the United States. A country that had for generations pursued a policy of invulnerability by means of high tech, high cost defences found itself unexpectedly vulnerable to a low tech, low cost attack, with horrific consequences. Understandably, the US reacted strongly, and not in every respect rationally. Influential Americans, especially but not exclusively the “neo-cons”, seem to have persuaded themselves that the potential nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction meant that US security was best, in fact, only assured by the US acting free of the constraints of international law, multilateral institutions and quarrelsome allies. Bookshelves are groaning under self-serving treatises about the inevitability of American dominion, justifying both its exceptionalist and unilateralist manifestations. Feckless allies are considered in Washington to owe the hegemon a decent loyalty, at least when it decided an action was in its vital interest, as in Iraq. There has until lately been no patience with disagreement, which is seen as moralistic qualms or strategic quibbles.



At no time in the Winter of 2002 and the Spring of 2003 did it seem to register in official Washington that a large majority of UN member states disagreed that war in Iraq was necessary and urgent and that their disagreement was not just the regrettable but transitory side effects of principled US leadership, to be endured until the aliens became more enlightened, but something that mattered, not least to the US's prospects of success there. No one seemed to ask that if reasonable countries disagreed, perhaps their arguments for restraint deserved serious consideration. Washington's hubris was only exceeded by its ignorance about what it was getting into, just as a previous best and brightest generation, according to Robert McNamara, went to war in Vietnam, with only the sketchiest understanding of the place.

Many of us warned our American contacts, futilely, that they were doing themselves incalculable harm. It did not have to be this way. There was little in the reaction of the international community to the tragic events of 9/11 to warrant the campaign of deprecation that Washington directed at the UN or the US's jeopardizing 60 years worth of the development of international law, most of which previous US Administrations had promoted, (and all of which was significant to Canadian interests). After the al Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council had, in fact, both acted sympathetically to the United States and urgently. On September 12, 2001, the General Assembly, which is not a decision-making body, issued a unanimous declaration of solidarity with the American people. A few days later, the UN Security Council, whose decisions are legally binding in international law, proscribed cooperation with terrorists, ordering member states to deny terrorists both safe haven and the use of national banking systems to finance their operations. The Council also established an oversight committee to monitor member states' compliance and to promote capacity-building in the poorer states.

Many governments, the Canadian government included, sent troops to Afghanistan to fight the Taliban and al Qaeda alongside Americans. Many, also, committed themselves to spend very large amounts of money to lift Afghanistan out of its failed-state status, so that it would not again become a rear operating base for terrorists. Afghanistan was made the largest recipient of Canadian funding, both Official Development Assistance and military. Nevertheless, the US Administration proceeded to propound a national security strategy positing not just pre-emption, which is foreseen in international law, but prevention, which is not. The difference is not just legal hair-splitting, especially in a policy approach of aggressive, reformist interventionism --Woodrow Wilson on steroids. Prevention as a doctrine implies much less rigorous tests than pre-emption does as regards capability and intent to do harm on the part of an adversary and the urgency of acting in self-defence. It, also, presumes very high quality intelligence on the part of the protagonist, which was catastrophically absent in the Iraq case, and sound interpretation of intelligence, which was equally missing. The war in Iraq implemented this policy and was actually preventive-to stop a tyrant with potentially malignant intentions and capabilities-but it was presented as pre-emptive, that is to stop a tyrant who already had weapons of mass destruction, terrorist links and malevolent plans for imminent action.

Further, the national security strategy articulated hegemonic intent which if implemented could eventually generate major wars, directly violating US treaty obligations under the Charter. In declaring war on terrorism, essentially on a heinous tactic but a tactic nonetheless, not on a tangible enemy such as the Al Qaeda network, and in portraying terrorism in monolithic terms, Washington gave itself mission impossible. In attacking Iraq despite the sketchiest of links between Al Qaeda and the Iraqi regime and despite having no hard evidence of weapons of mass destruction, and over the objections of undoubtedly the great majority of UN members, the US put itself offside of world public opinion. In conflating Iraq with the Palestinian-Israeli issue, US foreign policy itself confirmed, in the eyes of many, that it, the policy, was the problem. It is one of the more troubling aspects of public life in America today that the Israeli-Palestinian issue is so radioactive that not even the politically tone deaf seek to discuss it.

There is simply no debate on this pivotal issue. Senator Kerry is vying with President Bush about who can be more supportive of policies that not even many Israelis necessarily want. Not to mention the evangelical religiosity that has come to colour American Middle East policy, a subject worthy of a PhD thesis, and not in divinity. In any case, if the American people re-elect a president who has conducted an entirely elective war, which was massively opposed internationally, which has killed many innocents, which risks disrupting the most volatile area in the world, in the service of naïve or disingenuous policies, or both, that actually endanger the rest of us, no one should be surprised that the world will judge them severely.

It's Also the United Nations, Stupid

In attacking Iraq against the will of the international community, and in mishandling the occupation, the US did itself, and the UN, incalculable harm. It would be wrong, nevertheless, simply to lay all the UN's misfortunes at Washington's door. Rote apologies for the UN are little less damaging and embarrassing than mindless attacks on it. The UN Charter was written in and for a different age and treats national sovereignty as an absolute and immutable good. As a consequence, over time a contradiction has arisen between the most basic purpose of the UN, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", and one of its cardinal tenets, state sovereignty.

Because most wars, the Iraq war being a significant exception, currently arise within the borders of existing states, the inhabitants often cannot be protected from the scourge without intervention from the outside. There is no consensus internationally, at least yet, on how to respond to this new reality and, equally, there is no agreement on how to reform the aging, unrepresentative Security Council, still the most important political/security body on earth. Or why would the current Iraq resolution preoccupy so many people? Most fundamentally, the UN's strength, universal membership, has become also its weakness. Membership has swollen to 191 countries, making the achievement of consensus on any issue a Sisyphean task. As the UN has expanded and the world economy globalized, disparity between the richest and poorest has deepened, making the North-South economic divide ever more pronounced and the tensions all the more palpable). Poverty eradication and development became the near exclusive compass points of the South, which often dismissed security as an issue of interest primarily to the North and of little relevance in the South. The poorer countries, feeling vulnerable to the more powerful states, especially to the sole superpower, banded ever more resolutely together in the hoary Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and G-77. Combined with the strong dynamic for consensus in the General Assembly, this herd instinct made lowest common denominator outcomes the norm. It, also, provided a ready tool for political mischief, which was happily exploited by spoilers like Cuba, in the service of long dead ideologies and activists and reactionaries like the Libyans with dubious political objectives. Further, faced with the impossibility of moving the Security Council on Middle Eastern issues, largely because of the US veto, the Arabs under Palestinian leadership made the General Assembly their default forum. Much of the South, having relatively recently emerged from occupation and/or colonialism themselves, and identifying with the Palestinians' powerlessness and plight, made ready allies. Meanwhile, regional groups, which are indispensable to the efficient administration and management of the business of UN bodies, have

themselves sometimes produced destructive electoral outcomes, notably in the stunningly counterproductive election of Libya to the chair of the Commission on Human Rights.

Under these various pressures, the General Assembly has come to be seen in some countries, notably in the US, but also in Canada, as more theatre than parliament, with performances that are, except where they censure Israel, usually ignored outside the UN's immediate precincts. This has led some, including more moderate Americans, such as Ivo Daalder who served in the Clinton White House, and the esteemed director of the IRPP, to call for an Alliance of Democratic States that would either enhance the effectiveness of the world organization or outright replace it. The common values at the core of an Alliance of Democracies, it is argued, would confer a legitimacy on its decisions that Americans, and other democrats, would respect. Which respect, it is asserted further the UN, a supposed rogues' gallery of despots, human rights abusers and mini-states, has definitively forfeited.

I understand the longing for something better, or at least more reliable and conscience-driven on humanitarian crises and on human rights protection. This thesis, nonetheless, confers more rectitude on democracies than an examination of history will bear. Democracies are, also, capable of self-serving action and even chicanery. Worse, and contrary to contemporary fable, some have only been too willing to go to war, all the while proclaiming their peace-loving character. In any case, the UN membership is already two-thirds free or partly free, according to Freedom House. The theory also ignores the fact that resistance to US policy on Iraq was led in the Security Council by democratic governments, which had collectively little influence in Washington. Nor did the home of the mother of parliaments, but that's another issue.

It is evidence of the UN's resilience that in the face of such difficulties the organization has

persevered and, even, begun to rally. Member countries have, by and large, come to realize again both that multilateral cooperation is a necessary means to some important ends and that the UN is not irrelevant, as President Bush questioned in his UN General Debate statement in September, 2002, but rather indispensable to the good management of international relations. The Iraq experience has re-confirmed that the general concurrence of the world expressed through the UN remains necessary to confer legitimacy on acts of war Y and that that legitimacy is a prerequisite to broad-based, effective cooperation in the management of war's aftermath.

In an integrating world, where international decision-making authority is allocated by means of informal "subsidiarity", it is more evident than ever that overarching economic and social problems, such as climate change and communicable diseases, can best and often only be resolved globally. Most governments have come to the realization that the UN *per se* is central to such global cooperation.

All of this is not to say that the UN is sufficient unto itself. Nor that the universality of membership of the UN, which is integral to the organization's unique legitimacy, lends itself to efficiency. Nor that the UN is ready for the new challenges of a new era. Nor, more fundamentally, that a constitution written in and for another age, i.e., the Charter, which has come over time to contradict itself, can go on forever unamended. Reform is clearly and urgently needed. The UN, suffering from excessive caution and diplomatic arthritis, is facing quite fundamental political challenges and legal dilemmas. Most fundamentally, the UN must come to better grips with when and under what conditions the international community is justified in intervening in the internal affairs of member states. The grounds on which reform is being contemplated, in descending order of practicability, include humanitarian crises, the illegal development or acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, the provision of safe haven for terrorists and the overthrow of democratic governments.

There are good reasons for the neuralgic UN approach to these issues. Officials from countries that gained their independence in their own living memories see the concept of sovereignty as a crucial bulwark against renewed domination. They are understandably reluctant to risk creating new pretexts for interference by others. These worries are entirely comprehensible but they are not, nevertheless, an effective basis on which to protect the interests of their citizens in a changing world. As Secretary General Annan said in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech: "[t]he sovereignty of States must no longer be used as a shield for gross violations of human rights". Elsewhere he argued, "[t]his developing international norm in favour of intervention to protect civilians from wholesale slaughter will no doubt continue to pose profound challenges to the international community. In some quarters it will arouse distrust, scepticism, even hostility. But I believe on balance we should welcome it".

The tragic losses of 9/11 raise a related challenge, one much preoccupying people, even those



who disagree with US policy in Iraq. Does the nexus of WMD and terrorism provide a sufficient justification for outside intervention in a state's internal affairs? And if so who decides on the course of action to be taken? Secretary-General Annan also put this issue starkly, in his seminal address to almost 100 heads of government gathered in New York for the 2003 General Debate, as follows: “[s]ome say . . . since an armed attack with weapons of mass destruction could be launched at any time . . . states have the right and obligation to use force pre-emptively.” [The Secretary General clearly was referring to the US Administration.] “This logic represents a fundamental challenge to the principles on which, however imperfect, world peace and stability have rested for the last fifty-eight years . . .” He told the leaders assembled that “we have come to a fork in the road and that we must decide whether radical changes are needed.”

The Secretary General has done his part to respond to changing times, using his bully pulpit to urge reform and establishing a blue ribbon panel to propose specific remedies, both of what the UN does and how the UN does it, in that order. All UN members are going to have to come to a new understanding of the limits of state sovereignty and the advantages of sharing and pooling it, if the UN is to be effective. The onus to adapt does not fall exclusively on the poorer, younger countries. Few countries are more attached to the concept of sovereignty than the United States.

What Can Canada do about all this?

As much by virtue of our values, of who we are as a society, as by what we do in the world, although that needs our urgent attention, we do have the standing to contribute. Other countries rightly see Canada as one of the very few countries where minorities' rights are protected and diversity is valued. Our years of peacekeeping and putting the protection of people at the heart of our foreign policy have gained us considerable respect. Our position on the Iraq war has earned us substantial political credit with the less powerful among the UN's members and with many, probably most, of the more powerful, as well. On the two overarching challenges the UN faces, the absence of a common threat perception and the stubborn disparity between rich and poor, Canada can build bridges, as the Secretary-General reminded us when he addressed Parliament in March, 2004. Perhaps the most important such role is to help the world and the US reconcile their very considerable differences.

In the Third World, there is an historically understandable albeit irrational fear of too much outside intervention but an all too true and present reality of too little, as Rwanda tragically demonstrated, and the conflicts in the Congo and Sudan continue to confirm. We need to use our political capital to try to persuade Third World countries, the Africans above all, that by limiting and pooling their national sovereignty they can serve their interests. We, also, can work to alleviate the concerns of Latin Americans, who see Iraq and think Monroe Doctrine, and we can urge Asians to recalibrate their surprisingly strong attachment to the 17th century European idea of Westphalian sovereignty. We need to work also to understand, and to persuade others to address, Washington's sense of unique vulnerability. Canada can take the initiative to impart to others the particular, probably unique, insights into American motivations that we gain from geographic proximity and political and cultural propinquity.

Canada could also help the Secretary-General to rebalance the international agenda, to empower the United Nations to organize a global response to the global challenges of disease control, hunger, lack of schooling and environmental destruction. Specifically, we need to deal with the non-military sources of conflict. We need a vision encompassing education and health, democracy and human rights and good governance. We cannot build peace without alleviating poverty and we cannot build freedom on foundations of injustice. Weak states have become as big a danger to us as authoritarian states. We need to be proactive, to prevent threats even from arising. This entails working with states at risk to enhance the quality of their governance structures, increase the accountability of their leaders, reduce corruption, build policy development and institutional capacity and strengthen their legal and judicial systems.

The Millennium Development Goals address these daunting challenges. They present an effective framework for delivering on the commitment to alleviating poverty. Many of the solutions to hunger, disease and lack of education are well known. Despite what UN-bashers say, the specialized UN programs and agencies have extensive expertise and hands-on experience in dealing with these challenges. Here, Canada can help by marshalling talent from across our widely respected public service and civil society organizations to support the UN's efforts to build capacity in the poorer countries in order to enhance the quality of their own governance. As we help others build their own effective institutions, we also help the UN regain its effectiveness, an interest that we and the Americans share.

Reform of the United Nations system is necessary but not sufficient to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The weaknesses of other existing bodies need remedying and the lacunae between them need filling. The Bretton Woods organizations, for example, also have representation and voting rights aberrations. Further, the World Bank has grown to dominate other institutions in the development field and its role vis-à-vis the regional development banks and especially the UNDP needs recalibrating. Nor is the IMF's mandate clear in a floating exchange rate world, particularly vis-à-vis the more powerful countries which currently can and do ignore its prescriptions. NATO, a trans-regional alliance constructed on common values and united by a shared threat perception is struggling with the reality that neither the values nor the threats are as common as they once were.

The G-8, while effective in mobilizing the major industrialized countries on key issues, such as HIV/AIDS and NEPAD (New Economic Partnership for African Development), nonetheless is handicapped in achieving broader objectives by virtue of its limited membership. Prime Minister Martin's proposal for the creation of a larger, north-south group (a new L-20) that would be more representative of power and population realities now and foreseen is one possible answer to this problem. Such broader-based participation would facilitate broader-based "buy-in". Further, because heads of government have both the horizontal responsibility and political authority that their individual ministers by definition do not have, an L-20 at leaders' level could make breakthroughs on intractable problems. Prospects for progress on HIV-AIDS and other communicable diseases, on trade and agricultural subsidies, on terrorism and WMD, on international financial reform, on the Millennium Development Goals... and not least on the reform of the UN itself would be enhanced if the world's leading countries could sensitize each other, diminish the differences between them and, where possible, reach general agreements among themselves. Such a group would thus complement rather than compete with the UN, which would retain its unique legitimacy by virtue of its universal membership and its indispensable security role as framed in the Charter and international law. Such a group could, also, facilitate the work of the UN, itself, including the Security Council, by helping reduce North-South economic polarity and US-"other" security differences that often bedevil UN deliberations.

### Canada and the US

First, we have to stop blaming Canada for trouble between Ottawa and Washington - they are the ones who mislead us on a major war and undermined both the UN and international law. It is Ottawa that has a right to be upset (although we should avoid discourtesy, which is not worthy of us.)

Second, we have to find the courage to speak truth to power in Washington. We are the Americans' best friends, whether they like it or not, whatever the polls show people think. A friend of United States would not, as the British did, give them uncritical support on Iraq, in fact reinforce the Administration's political position against domestic American opponents of the war, when they were making such a major error. A friend would not have lent itself to intelligence chicanery, producing its own "dodgy dossier", including the nonsense about uranium from Africa. British motives in doing so were far from pristine, and included everything from enhancing their standing in Washington, to piggy-backing on American power, to trying to compensate for supposed American inadequacies.

For Canada, one of the lessons of this seminal experience is that we must not shrink from dealing frankly, albeit courteously, with US administrations when we think they are wrong. This means neither obscuring our foreign policy differences for anticipated bilateral benefits nor otherwise going along to get along. We need to speak to them frankly on the Middle East, for making clear our support for Israeli security but to express our doubts about the US reflexive support for Israeli policies that many Israelis don't support. This is probably the biggest cause of the suspicion, even the contempt, with which the United States is held in the Moslem world and far beyond. Further, we should not shrink from supporting and defending American positions when we think the US is right. Perhaps the most important threat we face is inadequately-secured Soviet nuclear weapons. We should do our full part and more on this issue which is of crucial concern to the US, a country fearful of the potential nexus of nuclear weapons and terrorists.

Finally, we should make ourselves a capable ally again. Canada can afford an active foreign policy, including a much beefed-up, combat-capable, peace-building trained military, especially ground forces. We should make an effective rather than prospective financial commitment to poorer countries, to support development and prevent states from failing. Not least, we should give ourselves a diplomatic service with the resources to meet our own, and others', expectations of Canada.

Finally, our will needs to match our wallet, which has never in Canadian history been better able to afford an effective foreign policy.