

Notes for a Lecture

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to the Laurier Lifelong Learning Association

“It’s the World, Stupid”

Waterloo May 28, 2008

Check Against Delivery

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Introduction

**Tonight, I would like to talk about the world we live in,
about where things seem to be going and what it all means to Canada**

I will discuss the emerging multi-power world, especially the return of Asia, and what that means for the UN and multilateral cooperation.

I will cover US foreign policy, and some of the adjustments the US will have to make if it is to regain its exemplar standing in the world.

And I will conclude with a discussion about what the world means to Canada and what we need to do to respond successfully to it, i.e., our foreign policy.

As the last few days events in Ottawa highlight, we have not been taking that world seriously enough for our own good.

Hence the title of tonight's presentation: "It's the World, Stupid".

The World, and the United Nations

The Asians, according to my former Singaporean colleague at the UN, Kishore Mahbubani, have long been regarded as just consumers of world history,

reacting tactically and defencively to the surges of Western commerce, power and thought.

But, now the Asians are returning to the center stage that they had occupied for eighteen centuries before the rise of the West.

From international commerce to finance to security to energy and climate change, progress is impossible without the willing engagement of the new-old powers of Asia.

Latin America, long a continent apart in political terms, is demanding and getting a decisive place at the top tables,

such as the Doha Round, the Bali Climate Change process, and, increasingly, the UN Security Council.

Brazil is now routinely invited to G8 meetings

Latin America is enhancing its OPEC credentials with renewable resources, which account for an astonishing 45 per cent of Brazil's energy.

Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa with its enduring, pernicious twin legacies of slavery and colonialism, trails the rest of the Third World, and suffers disproportionately from HIV-AIDS,

But, it too has its bright spots that promise graduation to better times.

At a time when the population of Africa is growing, infant mortality rates are dropping, deaths from measles are down spectacularly, deaths from malaria are down appreciably, and polio is almost eliminated.

Literacy and primary school enrolment is rising and more girls are attending school than ever, and the gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to have grown by 5.9 per cent last year and 5.7 per cent this coming year.

Meanwhile, Europe remains fabulously wealthy and capable of making enormously constructive contributions to world affairs, including military contributions.

The European Community and its 27 Member States taken together account for more than one half of all official development assistance (ODA) recorded by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD,

more than that of the World Bank's International Development Association and several times that of the United Nations Development Programme.

It, also, accounts for \$256 billion of military spending, cumulatively second only to the US.

Under President Putin, and thanks to rampaging commodity prices, especially oil, Russia is back,

Russia's economy ranks 10th in the world, just behind Canada's, but with a substantial and relatively well educated population and the second most powerful military in the world.

And the US remains the world's only superpower,

with the biggest economy,

the most powerful military,

the strongest universities,

the most advanced technology, including medicine,

arguably, the most emulated, and certainly most pervasive culture,

and undoubtedly most ambitious and active foreign policy.

The unipolar world is receding and a multi-power future is emerging, a prospect worthy of circumspection.

The Treaty of Vienna and the balance of power it created brought a century of peace and growing prosperity.

But when the balance was upset, the carnage was unprecedented,

70 million people died in the two world wars that followed.

Global governance is or should be everyone's priority.

If there ever was a time to inculcate a culture of respect for international law and treaty-based order into global affairs, this is it.

Which brings me to the UN.

I am here to praise the UN, or at least to appraise the UN, fairly, not to bury it.

I know first-hand that the United Nations has all the problems one would expect a 60-year-old institution to have.

As a “sixty-something” myself, I empathize with the frailties and failures of the organization.

I recognize that even among its supporters, the idea of the UN is often more respected than the reality of the UN

That it is more respected for the norms of international behaviour it develops than for the implementation of those norms,

more for the ideals it stands for than for the political problems it solves.

It is true that the UN’s problems are not inconsequential.

There is discord on even what the most fundamental mission of the organization should be.

For the poorer countries of the South, economic and social development trumps all.

For most of the founding members, that is to say, for the West, the UN’s central mission is collective security.

For the US, post 9/11, a major priority is terrorism,

the National Counterterrorism Center reported to the US Congress in 2006 *, that there were a total of 14,338 terrorist attacks around the world, resulting in 20,498 deaths, the lion’s share in Iraq.**

But for the poorer countries, even the security mission of the UN is, or should be, different.

Consider what security looks like from the perspective of the poor:

- **Natural disasters killed nearly 25,000 people in 2006, the vast majority in poorer countries.**

(Source: Red Cross),

<http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/disasters/wdr2007/WDR2007-English.pdf>

- **That figure was 240,000 people killed in 2004, most in the poorer countries.**

- **Small arms and light weapons were directly responsible for the deaths of about 100,000 people in 2003***, and indirectly responsible for perhaps 200,000 more, predominantly in the poorer countries.**

(Source: Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland (Keith Krause); smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/issueareas/victims/victimcost)

- **Intra-state conflict caused the deaths of 100's of thousands more, notably in Africa.**
- **Pregnancy-related complications killed more than 535,000 ***women, 99% of them in the Third World.(Source: WHO Report**

http://www.icrw.org/docs/Maternal_Mortality_2005.pdf

- **Malaria killed one million people in last year, mostly in the poorest countries,**

_____(Source: Centre for Disease Control & Prevention, World Malaria Report 2005, www.cdc.gov/malaria)

- and HIV-AIDS killed over two million people in 2005***, again overwhelmingly in the Third World (Source:UNAIDS/WHO AIDS Epidemic Update, November 2007)

Where you stand on security depends obviously on where you live.

Moreover, the United Nations is a mirror to the world.

The world is struggling to adjust to the increasing pace of millennial change, and to accommodate China and India, and Japan, too, into global power structures

So is the United Nations.

The rise of Asia is intensifying the convictions of some that the UN Security Council has a legitimacy deficit that must be remedied if the organization is to function effectively.

Some, notably India, Japan, Germany, Brazil and certain African countries want the Council to reflect contemporary and emerging power realities.

But in the eyes of others, the Council has a performance deficit—Darfur being a current case in point.

Some, including Canada, have preferred accountability over representativeness,

and would circumscribe or even abolish the veto altogether and make all states democratically accountable to the membership.

Whatever the Council's idiosyncrasies, most countries of the rich "North" see the Security Council, ,;

which they control

as supreme.

Others, mostly in the South, want the General Assembly, which they control, to predominate.

No one, literally, is in charge of the UN.

It is a club under the control of its members, especially those members who have the permanent seats on the Security Council—the US, the UK, France, China and Russia.

The position of Secretary General is deliberately circumscribed in the UN Charter.

Most member states are content that the incumbent be more secretary than general, the chief administrative officer of the UN, according to Article 97 of the Charter, not the chief executive officer.

Few, among rich or poor, want the one reform that would make the UN more effective instantly.

real, independent executive authority, for example a small standing army.

Beyond the mission and the structure of the organization is the profound lack of consensus that exists within the international community at large on particular issues.

and the consequent manifestations of that discord at the UN in New York.

This is particularly the case for the interlocking Middle East conflicts,

which are not only producing severe consequences for the region but for the world.

and which inevitably manifest themselves at the UN.

Jordanian King Abdullah traveled to Washington this past summer to tell the US Congress that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was the core issue in the Middle East.

He was greeted by deaf ears.

Beyond the Middle East there is Kashmir and Afghanistan, North Korea and Myanmar, the Horn of Africa and Zimbabwe, which impact discussions at the UN well beyond the immediate problems at hand.

Not to omit Al Qaeda and international terrorism.

Or poverty, or disease, or Climate Change

What little common ground there had been among member countries shrank with the Iraq war.

But even before Iraq, there were the conscience-shocking failures in Cambodia, the Congo, the Balkans and Rwanda.

It is the innocents of Darfur who now wait on the controlled conscience of key members of the UN Security Council, notably China, as well as Sudan and its neighbours and G77 sympathizers.

The UN secretariat has forced the world to confront the unfolding tragedy of Darfur but the reactions of some member countries have been, literally, unconscionable.

The attitude of some permanent representatives of the G77 to Darfur has been particularly exasperating,

even denying that their own heads of government had endorsed the responsibility to protect doctrine at the Millennium summit in 2005

A new Human Rights Council has replaced the old Human Rights Commission, which had become a caricature of its former, successful self,

but the performance of the Council has been unbalanced, feeding anti-UN sentiment in Israel and the US, and undermining support for the UN in Canada, as well.

Its recent critique of Saudi Arabia's treatment of women redeems one element of its raison d'être.

The United Nations has had some management failures and scandals, too, although fewer and less serious ones than UN-bashing neo-cons would have us believe.

(And, in any case, they pale into insignificance compared to the disappearance of the \$9 billion in Iraqi money that the UN Oil for Food program turned over to the Coalition Provisional Authority, who lost it.)

When such divisions prevail, virtually every issue at the UN, especially management and budget reform, become politics by other means,

proxies for these larger political and ideological differences among member countries.

One consequence has been a deepening distrust on the part of the member states of each other's motives, which makes effective governance of the institution,

and of world affairs generally,

more difficult.

To quote the beloved American cartoon figure of my childhood, Pogo, drawn by Walt Kelly, "we have met the enemy and he is us."

The UN's enemy is its member states.

It would be understandable, even easy in these circumstances to retreat from multilateralism into unilateralism, pessimism, even cynicism.

But, notwithstanding its problems, it is worth reminding ourselves that the United Nations remains an indispensable instrument of international governance.

A Better Organization Than We Realize—and Perhaps Deserve

The world's aspirations for the United Nations have often exceeded the organization's grasp but it has, nevertheless, generally served us reasonably well, and sometimes, very well.

With the lessons of two world wars in mind, the UN gave birth to a body of international law that stigmatized aggression and created an increasingly strong norm against it.

Although the Cold War saw international law breached by both sides, the norm against aggression gradually strengthened.

Since then, the legal force of the Charter has continued to grow.

Since the end of the Cold War, according to the Human Security Report of 2005, published at Simon Fraser University, the number of armed conflicts involving states around the world has declined by more than 40%,

for which pro-active UN prevention efforts merit a large measure of credit.

The number of terrorist incidents is also down, according to the 2007** Human Security report**

Through the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN has assisted East and West avoid a nuclear Armageddon,

and limit the advent of new nuclear weapons states.

The UN has helped the world to feed its hungry, shelter its dispossessed, minister to its sick and educate its children.

For example, according to UNICEF, more children go to school than ever before.

The number of polio cases has been reduced from 350,000 in 1988 to 2,000 today.

Since 1960, there has been more than a 50% drop in child mortality.

- **In 1960, approximately 20 million children did not live to see their fifth birthday,**
- **By 2006, that figure dropped to 9.7 million, which is still tragically high, but better.**

The UNHCR protected 19 million refugees last year*[year?] and scores of millions more over the years.**

The World Food Program helped 113 million people in 2004*[latest stat?] alone.**

The UN Mine Action Service has assisted states party to the Ottawa Treaty in their destruction of 38.3 million landmines.

More mundanely, the UN has

regulated the world's air travel,

coordinated its mail services,

**overseen its patents system,
regulated its shipping
and apportioned its electromagnetic spectrum,
among many other unsung but necessary tasks.**

There is no doubt in my mind that the world would have been a less orderly and more bloody place in the last 50 years without the United Nations.

Overlooked in the recriminations stimulated largely by differences over the Iraq war and the Oil for Food Program, at least in North America, is the extent that the UN has re-invented itself.

Since the end of the Cold War, member countries have been much readier to authorize the use force to stop *internal* conflicts.

The statistics are pretty well-known but they are significant enough to bear repeating:

From 1945 until 1989, there were 17 UN military operations;

Since then, there have been 43 military interventions under UN auspices,

and the UN's annual peacekeeping budget has grown to over \$5 billion, with about a 100,000 personnel in the field*, second only to the US.**

The UN has served as mid-wife in the births of more than 100 countries since 1945, the great majority of which came into being peacefully.

It has also supervised scores of elections and otherwise helped many members make transitions to democracy;

According to Freedom House, over two-thirds of UN member countries are now full or partial democracies.

The passage of a half dozen core human rights treaties and their progressive assimilation into domestic laws has made it possible for an increasing share of the world's people to live in dignity and safety.

An extensive international criminal justice system has developed under UN auspices, a major innovation foreseen nowhere in the original Charter.

It is instructive, and in a way, encouraging, that Joseph Kony, head of the murderous Lord's Resistance Army of child soldiers, has attempted to negotiate immunity from prosecution by the ICC, as have Sudanese officials.

Impunity is not yet a thing of the past but the world's monsters are no longer sleeping as soundly in their beds, confident that they are immune to prosecution.

Further, it was to the UN that Lebanon turned for the investigation of the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri.

The UN has given birth to concepts the world now takes for granted, including "sustainable development", the seminal contribution of the commission led by former Norwegian Prime Minister Brundtland.

Scores of environmental treaties have been concluded under UN auspices, from protecting the ozone layer to climate change.

The UN's leadership in keeping the climate change issue on the international radar screen has been crucial, especially at a time when the major polluters are locked in disagreement.

Perhaps the most visible recent UN innovation has been the creation of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The then head of that office, Jan Egeland of Norway deserves a Nobel Prize, for his brilliant and courageous management of the response to the Asian Tsunami.

His performance almost single-handedly shamed the world community into greater generosity.

Although it is too early to chock them up as successes, the UN's Peacebuilding efforts are innovative in their ambitions to help countries back from the abyss of failure and conflict.

A standing police capability for the UN is being created, to complement UN military actions.

And, at the 2005 summit, the UN meeting at head of state and government level, endorsed, the Canadian-initiated idea of the "Responsibility to Protect," launched in the aftermath of Rwanda and Srebrenica.

A new office has been established by the UN to give conceptual and operational translation to the Responsibility to Protect.

Thirteen counter-terrorism treaties have been concluded by the General Assembly, despite the UN's regrettable failure to agree to a definition of terrorism,

and the UN Security Council has twice "legislated" the proscription of cooperation with terrorists by member countries.

All told, over 500 multilateral treaties have been concluded under UN auspices.

The point is that from counter-terrorism treaties,

to peacebuilding,

to human rights conventions,

to the support of democracy and promotion of the rule of law,

to coordinating disaster relief,

to fostering sustainable development,

to rebuilding states emerging from conflict,

to assisting states in the transition to democracy

the UN has taken very significant strides into the 21st century.

The US and the UN

There are even grounds for cautious optimism that attitudes are changing in Washington, perhaps the UN's major, certainly its most influential critic.

The Bush administration's reign of error is coming to an end.

**Its failings are manifold and well known to all but the neo-cons,
from its unilateral interpretations of the Torture and Geneva
Conventions
to its invasion of Iraq in contravention of the UN Charter
despite the opposition of the great majority of member countries,
resulting in the deaths and maiming of scores of thousands of
Iraqis, as well as thousands of Americans**

The Bush Administration's record is all the more distressing because it stands in such stark contrast to the towering foreign policy achievements of earlier administrations.

If only to rebalance our thinking, it is worth highlighting only the most obvious past US successes.

- **American participation turned the tide in World War I and II.**
- **American diplomacy promoted the idea and produced the institutions of collective security, including the United Nations and the treaty-based system of international law.**
- **The Marshall Plan put Europe back on its feet and Germany and Japan on the road to democratic governance.**
- **Containment led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of communism, without a shot being fired, perhaps the signal security achievements of the second half of the 20th century.**
- **American military power and diplomatic acuity have preserved peace and stability in North-East Asia, perhaps the most dangerous region on the planet.**

That was then; this, however, is now.

President Bush who famously asked in his General Assembly address of September 12, 2002, whether “the United Nations [will] serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?” will himself soon be irrelevant.

Whoever wins, he will be replaced by someone more open to working with others, including through the UN.

Senator McCain does not manifest much enthusiasm for the UN.

It seems to remain a core belief of the conservative base of the Republican Party that the UN somehow constitutes a challenge to American standing, and is the centre of Anti-Americanism in the world.

But, if McCain’s stump speeches and op-ed and journal articles mean anything,

He seems likely to be pragmatic on multilateralism.

He does not see the UN as more than one instrument among many of US foreign policy.

But he does profess an intention to work with others, including the UN and to rebuild alliances.

He takes the existence of the UN as a given,

He would lead on Darfur, and would remind Khartoum that the ICC has jurisdiction to prosecute crimes in Darfur, not positions most US conservatives would embrace.

But he, also, foresees the creation of a League of Democracies, which would act where the UN failed to do so, an initiative he maintains would be compatible with the UN.

The party of Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman, the Democrats, has traditionally been more multilateralist, and that is likely to remain the case.

They have typically been less suspicious of the UN and take it as a necessary if sometimes misguided and inadequate and nearly always exasperating feature of the international order.

Senator Clinton has called the organization “a tool not a trap” and prefers on issues such as Darfur and the Human Rights Council not to abandon the UN but to bring it, in her words

“in line with the power realities of the twenty-first century and the basic values embodied in such documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”.

Senator Obama, the presumptive Democratic winner, has been quite specific in his criticism of UN management practices, peacekeeping operations, the attitude towards Israel by the Human Rights Council, Darfur and Zimbabwe.

His solution, however, is for the US

“to rededicate itself to the organization and its mission”.

Both Republicans and Democrats can be expected to be circumspect, at best, in bringing the UN into the Israel-Palestine peace process.

Senator McCain's preoccupation with "Islamic Fascism" risks deepening the cleavages between the US and the Muslim world and worsening the atmosphere at the UN in the process.

Meanwhile, Senator Obama, who is being painted as anti_Israel by some, will likely be at least circumspect in taking on any of the positions of the most powerful lobby in Washington, the Israel lobby.

Exceptionalism, Spirituality and Militarism: the US and the UN

Beyond the individual and party positions taken in the campaign mode, which might or might not be carried into practice by whoever gains the office,

there are some deeper influences that shape the thinking and affect the positions of candidates from both sides of the political divide and cultural wars in the US—

particularly exceptionalism, religion and militarism.

All three offer important clues to understanding US foreign policy, and where it might be going.

As a consequence of the leadership role that the US has assumed and that most others have readily conceded and even welcomed,

and because of the considerable costs and risks of such leadership,

both sides of the political aisle in Washington have come increasingly to regard the US as bearing a disproportionate burden

and, partly as a consequence, as meriting exceptional dispensations from international law and norms of behaviour.

This sense of entitlement to exceptional treatment is a contemporary twist on a powerful sentiment in the collective American psyche, America as a new and better world.

The idea of exceptionalism likely dates from the Puritan migration in the 17th century, perhaps first recorded in John Winthrop's sermon on the "Shining City on the Hill".

US "exceptionalism" was given modern currency in the 1980's when President Ronald Reagan evoked the "shining city",

a metaphor that evidently continues to hold a strong appeal for many Americans, including Senator McCain.

The Clinton administration expressed the same idea differently when Secretary of State Madeleine Albright characterized the US as the one indispensable country.

and in the process inadvertently gave the rest of the world an excuse to leave every problem up to the Americans to solve.

Exceptionalism has, also, been imbued with a religious quality.

President Lincoln spoke of "an almost chosen people".

President Franklin Roosevelt spoke of America's "divine heritage".

President Reagan saw the world in Manichaeian terms, calling the Soviet Union as the Evil Empire.

President George W. Bush has said that “the advance of freedom is the calling of our time; it is the calling of our country.”

Evangelical convictions play into American policy especially the “War on Terror”, giving it overtones, at least, of a war on Islam,

and complicate American policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and on Iraq and Syria, as well.

The growth of exceptionalism and of religion in US foreign policy has been paralleled by a process of militarization.

The US military has recovered from the nadir of Vietnam.

Now politicians of every hue literally and figuratively feel they have to salute the military

There are serious foreign policy consequences to this reversal of fortune.

To paraphrase Stompin’ Tom Connors, I think, “when your favourite tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail.”

According to Robert Bacevich of Boston University, a former military officer who has chronicled the rebuilding of the US military, the Pentagon’s long range plans call for a budget more than 20% higher than the Cold War average.

This spending level is in the absence of any obvious challenger, including China whose military expenditures last year were about \$50 billion or less than one-tenth of US expenditures.

All electoral candidates, Democratic as well as Republican, would spend substantially more money on the US military.

**The enhanced standing of the US military and the scale of its resources,
the presumption of America's exceptional standing,
the presence of religious impulses in US foreign policy,
have all coloured American attitudes towards the world, including the UN, in recent years
and are likely to continue to do so for some time to come.**

Canada and the World

That is the very challenging world in which Canadian foreign policy operates.

If the UN is indispensable but deeply divided

and the US is the most powerful country on earth but pursuing a flawed foreign policy,

what does that mean for Canada?

Some, self-styled "Realists", would support our super-power right or wrong.

Others, pejoratively called “Romantics” would throw in our lot with multilateralism.

Both would be wrong.

As my old boss Allan Gotlieb has observed, our effectiveness in the world, including New York, depends in part on our influence in Washington.

And our influence in Washington depends in part on our effectiveness in the world.

In either case we need a competent, independent foreign policy.

We bring more to the table than many Canadians living in the US’s giant shadow realize.

As Louise Frechette, former UN Deputy Secretary General, a woman in a position to know if anyone ever was, the rest of the world does not see us as a small country,

they see us a major country that rightly sits with the G8.

There is a group of maybe 10-15 countries in the world that have critical mass,

that have the skill, knowledge, resources and the capacity to influence the affairs of the world,

And we are one of them.

The world really does respect us for our successful, prosperous, bilingual, multi-ethnic, law-abiding, cultivated and compassionate society.

The world knows that we value diversity and integrate foreigners into national life and purpose not perfectly but as well or better than any one else.

We are seen as a country that tries, and, mostly, succeeds to respect human rights and to protect minorities, a country worthy of emulation, albeit one that ought to do better by its aboriginal population.

We are recognized for a culture that generates remarkable excellence in literature, the arts and science.

We are also known for an economy that delivers an enviable quality of life and a very high standard of living.

Our economy ranks about 8th in the world,

we are one of the world's major trading countries,

our resource base is enviable and envied,

Our modest population is larger than that of over 150 other countries,

And even our military capacity is not trivial;

our military spending, before this year's substantial increase, ranks Canada 12th out of 192 countries.

All of which makes it that much more disappointing that as a nation, we have been in retreat from international responsibility for a generation.

On military deployments abroad, Canada has fallen dramatically far down the list of contributors to UN missions, below countries with a small fraction of our population and wealth.

Even counting our contribution to Afghanistan, where we field 2,500 of the best troops on earth, we do not crack the top 10 in international military contributions to international peace and security.

On development assistance, we rank closer to the bottom of donor generosity than to the top.

On the environment, we relinquished international leadership a decade ago, albeit not our pretensions to leadership.

Afghanistan

All of which brings me to “Job One” these days, Afghanistan.

I think John Manley was right when he said that we often talk about Canada’s role in the world, and that in Afghanistan we have a meaningful one.

I, also, believe that the Manley Report got the issues raised by Canadian participation mostly right

and that the government has done the right thing in endorsing it.

My assumptions are

- **that the majority of Afghans, who have suffered enormously from 30 years of war and repression, need and want foreign help, including Canadian help;**
- **that Afghanistan is not Iraq; it is a NATO-led, UN-authorized mission;**
- **that the situation has deteriorated but is not lost;**
- **that much more needs to be done by the international community as a whole to retrieve it;**
- **that that effort will be fruitless unless the infiltration of Taliban from Pakistan can be curtailed**
- **that, ultimately, there will have to be a political solution and that peace will have to be made with enemies, not friends**
- **And that Canadians are not pacifists and will support Canada's military/aid/diplomacy effort so long as they believe it is necessary, affordable, effective, and not just serving Washington's agenda.**

I have no patience for timelines created essentially for the purposes of political self-definition and partisan advantage in Canada.

We have national security and human security interests at stake in Afghanistan that require protecting, and they do not respond to partisan calculation or ideological wishful-thinking.

Canada has a national security interest in seeing Afghanistan develop to the point where it can defend itself from the Taliban and not fall back into being a haven for al Qaeda and international terrorism.

We have a national security interest in seeing greater stability in a region with three nuclear-armed states and a fourth aspirant.

We have a human security responsibility for the protection of women and children, notably the access of women and girls to education and health care.

And, we have a human security interest in making multilateral cooperation work and demonstrating that the UN and NATO can successfully assist failed and failing states and protect populations

In the exasperatingly complex situation that prevails in pre-modern Afghanistan, these goals will not be achieved on a Canadian electoral schedule.

Nor do I put any store in the notion that we can make-believe our way to a peacekeeping role in Afghanistan for ourselves that frees us of combat.

The Taliban are a fighting force and they decide whether there will be combat or not.

Since the Brahimi reforms of the late nineties, when the UN realized it would have to choose sides if it did not want to be complicit in war crimes,

and since the advent of the UN's civilian protection resolutions, led by Canada, and their explicit mandating of the use of force to protect the innocent,

including in intra-state conflict,

classical peacekeeping missions have been few and far between.

Combat has become commonplace.

Moreover, if the Canadian Forces were not suppressing the insurgency, it would be impossible to deliver humanitarian and development assistance.

Aid workers have not proven any more immune to attack in Afghanistan than the UN, itself, has done in Iraq or Algeria.

On the contrary, they are among the softest of targets.

I would not want to be the one to ask CIDA and Canadian NGOs to try to function without the security the military brings.

All of this does not mean that I support the mission willy-nilly.

The main issues for me are

- **Whether the cause is just**
- **Whether the goals are realistic**
- **Whether the costs are affordable and commensurate with the gains, and**
- **Whether we have a strategy that will lead to success, i.e., whether we know what we are doing.**

That's why I support the caveats in the Manley report and the emphasis on practical standards for measuring progress.

Results, or their lack, are the basis on which we should determine the duration of the mission.

Effective communications are one of the hardest parts of foreign policy, and the most necessary.

Like the Manley Commission, I see a pressing need for more effective communications.

Traditionally, Canadian Governments communication skills have ranked somewhere between those of North Korea and Myanmar.

With the current government's obsession with controlling the message, we are decidedly towards the North Korean end of the scale.

In war, the first casualty is said to be truth.

But in the internet age, any government's ability to control communications is all but impossible.

The more it shuts down the public service, the louder the ramp ceremonies and the funerals of soldiers do the talking.

If the government should have learned any lesson from the detainees "crisis" earlier this year

Or of the current crisis over the bad judgment of former foreign minister Maxime Bernier

it is that the truth will out.

and the corollary is that it will do so at the least convenient time for the government.

The Canadian public takes a major interest in international affairs and draws on all the media, old and new, for its information.

It is not dependent on government sources even for information that originates in government.

The Harper Government should stop trying to stick its finger into the dike, communicate more pro-actively and level with the Canadian people

Otherwise, the Afghanistan effort will be lost not in Kandahar but in Canada.

Communications efforts need to be honest, frequent and open.

This means generally a pro-active communications strategy,

- **with frequent on-the-record briefings by knowledgeable, responsible officials, including our Ambassadors abroad,**
- **numerous press encounters by Cabinet level-officials,**
- **and much greater recourse to Afghanistan voices who are credible witnesses to what is happening in their country**

I, also, support the Manley emphasis on diplomacy, which has been neither aggressive enough or effective enough for the job at hand.

I very much think we have both an interest and the standing to be pushing hard on the diplomatic front.

And I think it entirely appropriate that the prime Minister, himself, lead this effort.

Both to get more help from our allies

And to bring pressure to bear on Pakistan.

The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan is obviously very important.

Curtailling the movement of the Taliban back and forth across the border is important, perhaps decisive to defeating the insurgency.

I have the impression the Pakistanis haven't done as much as they could have done,

and I think we need to press them to do more, preferably in the company of others.

The main preoccupation of the Americans has been al-Qaeda.

Their second preoccupation has been the stability of Pakistan and the security of its the nuclear weapons.

And the third - and I think some distance down the list - has been the relationship between some Pakistanis and the Pakistan intelligence service with the Taliban.

If our highest priority is third on the Americans' list, we have to press Washington harder for a more aggressive stance.

I sense a degree of diffidence about diplomacy that contrasts sharply with the assertiveness of our military effort.

That seems to reflect a larger problem of distaste for diplomacy in general and for Foreign Affairs in particular.

Foreign Affairs does have its problems but not those that many of its critics assume.

One major problem is resources.

At about \$2 billion, the Foreign Affairs budget is little more than a rounding error in the government's \$200 billion plus accounts.

Compared to the new military budget of about \$15 going on \$50 billion, it is modest indeed.

The government is right to rebuild the Canadian military but, given the "Golden Rule" of government, unless Foreign Affairs shares in this growth, Canadians are going to get a military-dominated foreign policy.

And Foreign Affairs is not sharing in that growth.

Despite the fact that a dollar spent on diplomacy buys more security at the margin than a dollar spent on military hardware, Canada has fewer diplomats abroad than any other G8 country does.

Seventy-five percent of foreign service jobs are in Ottawa, where operating costs are lower.

While the federal budget surplus has been growing, the department has been struggling with enormous, progressive budget cuts.

The Foreign Affairs budget of \$2.8 billion, most of it non-discretionary, is down from \$3.1 billion last year and is projected to shrink next year, and the year after.

The foreign ministry's profile is low, morale is poor and the Canadian diplomatic corps is all but silent, and historic embassies around the world are up for sale.

Foreign Affairs is trying to sell off properties acquired decades, even generations, ago for one-time infusions of cash.

Meanwhile in Washington, under Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice's leadership, plans are being made to double the personnel of the State department and of US AID, coordinate better with the US department of Defense, etc.

Perhaps this is another Washington initiative that the Canadian government should the Government of Canada will emulate.

Conclusion

So where in the world is Canada?

My judgment is that we exercise a leadership role in very few areas.

We are content, for the most part, to take our cues from others.

It is evident that foreign policy is important,

that it is more difficult than it looks,

that the Prime Minister must lead on policy,

that he must appoint a minister for Foreign Affairs who has both the aptitude and experience for the job

and that Canadians are short-changing themselves when they elect governments with so little interest in the world.

They need to expect more, in fact, demand more, of their governments.

To all of us, the message is clear

“It’s the World, Stupid”.

We ignore it at our peril.