

**Notes for a Statement by Paul Heinbecker,  
Canada, the United States and the  
International Community:  
Or Why I Am So Damn Angry at George Bush  
(Jr.),  
Rideau Club,  
Ottawa,  
February 11, 2004**

1. Multilateral cooperation is indispensable,  
whatever imperial aspirations might inhabit some of  
the more neo-conservative corners in Washington.

2. This administration's good faith around the  
world is widely doubted.

At the same time, the U.S. relationship remains vital to us across the board.

3. Canada does not have an option just to  
choose between the USA and the world; we need do whatever  
we can to try to bring the two together in a new consensus.

**That is easier said than done.**

**The Government of Canada has some major problems:**

- **the most radical U.S. administration, arguably, since Andrew Jackson's, one that is persuaded of its own goodness and which seems to believe that other agree.**

**! a U.S. government that seems to see its security best, even only, ensured by its own military might**

**! Advancing the rule of law when the world's most powerful country explicitly regards itself as exceptional and above the law**

**! Working to refine and develop an international system whose confines the United States often rejects**

- **Working to help reform the United Nations, which has become dated and, in some important respects, dysfunctional, when many of its members have become ultra distrustful of the United States, in part because of the Iraq war**

- **How both to protect Canada's interests in these circumstances and still stay true to our values.**

## Multilateral Cooperation

▪ There is more to multilateral cooperation than the United Nations, but the UN retains the unique authority of universal membership and unlimited mandate, and therefore remains central, in fact, indispensable.

We need to remind ourselves that the United Nations is both a means and an end-in-itself.

Consider

! e.g. terrorism; the UN's 12 conventions, controls and capacity-building

! e.g. arms control and disarmament; nuclear non-proliferation regime; the Iraq and Iran cases

! e.g. health threats; military power cannot stop SARS or Avian Flu or HIV-AIDS

! e.g. the environment; coalitions of the willing cannot stop climate change, ozone holes

! e.g. international trade & investment \*\*

! e.g., human rights; the U.N.'s six core treaties

The U.N. is not just our organization.

It also belongs to the poor and oppressed of the world.

**Consider:**

- **UNICEF- 575 million children inoculated**
- **WFP- 77 million people fed**
- **UNHCR- 22 million housed**
- **UNMAS- 65 million sq. meters cleared**
- **UNFPA- reproductive health in 140 countries**
- **Not least, the Millennium Development Goals**

**This work has been belittled by some as mere international social work– but if it is “social work”, it has very real benefits for the recipients and equally real security consequences for the rest of us.**

**Well-governed, successful societies abroad generate peace and prosperity for their peoples and regions and eliminate the conditions that incubate terrorism and disease and that generate refugee flows.**

**For all these reasons, the U.N. is also indispensable to the United States, the country that has dominated the organization literally since its gestation.**

**(By the way, of the 254 vetoes used since 1946, four were used by China (+1 by Taiwan); 18 by France, 32 by the UK, 78 by the US and 121 by the USSR/Russia.**

**But, 106 of the 121 Russian vetoes were made before 1965.)**

**(by the way, in the G.A, Canada voted the same as the U.S. a little less than 50% of the time on important votes as defined by the US (not counting consensus votes)**

**Recently, with the appeal of the USA to the U.N. to re-engage in the search for a political solution to the divisions in Iraq, the U.S. Administration is conceding at least that the U.N. is, at least, useful.**

**We do not have to choose between the U.S. and the U.N.**

**In fact, it would be a mistake to do so.**

**The point is to understand our own interests, the**

American's interests and the U.N.'s strengths and weaknesses

### THE U.N. NEEDS FIXING

The United Nations Charter was written in and for a different age.

A contradiction has grown up between the most basic purpose of the U.N.--'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'

and one of its most basic precepts--the protection of the sovereignty of the State, i.e., the proscription under Article 2.1 of the Charter of interference in the internal affairs of member states.

The fundamental reform issue facing the UN as an entity is determining when to intervene in the internal affairs of a member state.

- intervention for humanitarian purposes
- intervention for security purposes ( e.g. terrorism, WMD)?
- intervention for political purposes (overthrow of democracy)?

Solving these issues should and probably would facilitate a new consensus between the U.N.

**and the USA on the risks and dangers we all face.**

**Unfortunately, the Iraq war conflated these issues – and made both a common assessment of the challenge more remote and U.N. reform more difficult.**

**U.N. Reform and U.S. Foreign Policy**

**American hostility to the U.N. is a relatively new phenomenon.**

**It is worth reminding ourselves that until recently, virtually all U.S. presidents valued the United Nations, to a greater or lesser extent.**

**President Franklin D. Roosevelt**

**President Truman**

**Kennedy called in 1963 for the United Nations to become “genuine world security system . . . capable of solving disputes on the basis of law”**

**Mr. Reagan had said that the U.N. stood as a symbol of the**

hopes of all mankind for a more peaceful and  
productive world

For most of the U.N.'s existence, then, the  
United States respected, indeed drove the  
development of international law and acknowledged  
the value of the U.N.

This current administration seems to see both  
very differently.

President came to office with virtually no international experience (e.g.,  
would not know anything about making judgements about uses of intelligence, its limits  
and indeed when to be skeptical)

Then along came 9/11.

The experienced hands who were to guide him turned out to have an agenda, which he  
has been willing to further

9/11 triggered a revolution in American foreign policy thinking and practice.

The heart of the National Security Strategy of  
September 2002, in essence, WMD +terrorism  
necessitates prevention, is new in its ready  
disposition to act unilaterally, outside of an



international consensus

By the way, preemption vs prevention are not the same—pre-emption is permitted under international law—the Caroline case, as argued by Daniel Webster.

Bush's reference in the State of the Union to a "Permission slip" was gratuitous—

Self-defence, even through preemption, is permitted under international law.

But, prevention, acting on a hunch about capabilities and possible intentions down the road, is not permitted by the U.N. Charter-- for good reasons..

(Secretary General Kofi Annan framed these issues in his address at this year's General Debate:)

"Some say...[that] since an armed attack with weapons of mass destruction could be launched at any time...states have the right and obligation to use force preemptively"

(The SG clearly was referring to this 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...”**

**The Secretary General went on to say that this could result “in a proliferation of the unilateral and lawless use of force, with or without justification.”**

**Finally, the Secretary General told the leaders in the Assembly that “we have come to a fork in the road” and that we must decide whether radical changes are needed.”**

**He appointed a “blue ribbon” panel to give member countries advice**

**This latter day American revolution, brought about by the Bush Administration, would set aside seventy-five, plus, years of the development of international law, (much of it created under U.S. leadership)**

**The development of international law, accepted rules of behaviour, and a disposition to promote cooperation over competition are Canadian foreign policy priorities.**

**That is why we cannot simply turn the page and move on—we have to resist this revolution.**

**The Bush Administration did not initiate this Departure but it enormously expanded it.**

**Nor did the Iraq war create the U.N.'s problems, although it greatly exacerbated them.**

**In any case, the Iraq war experience, especially the aftermath, clearly shows that even the U.S. cannot afford to live in opposition to the rest of the world.**

**As Robert Kagan observed in a recent New York Times article, quoting the quintessential realist, Henry Kissinger:**

**" America's "special responsibility, as the most powerful nation in the world "is to work toward an international system that rests on more than military power – indeed, that strives to translate power into**

cooperation.

Any other attitude, [Kissinger said,] will gradually isolate and exhaust us."

Regrettably, the war in Iraq has had precisely that effect.

Ed Djerejian, a former U.S. Ambassador to Israel and Syria, was asked by the current Bush administration to report on U.S public diplomacy.

He reported that "the bottom has indeed fallen out of support for the U.S." around the world, particularly but far from exclusively in Moslem countries".

My personal assessment is, also, that U.S. credibility is at the lowest point in memory.

And little wonder.

Consider the evidence:

1. Paul O'Neill, former Secretary of the Treasury said in the Price of Loyalty that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld began to push the idea of regime change in

**Feb 2001, six months before 9/11, as a way to transform the Middle East.**

**2. President Bush's 2003 State of the Union Speech asserted that Iraq imported uranium from Africa, a forgery that took the IAEA no more than a day or so to establish.**

**(By the way, no humanitarian motive was given in that speech for invading Iraq—it was all Weapons of Mass Destruction).**

**3. Vice President Dick Cheney on June 20, 2002, told the Veterans of Foreign Wars that “Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.”**

**Most egregious, he told Tim Russert on Meet the Press on March 7, 2003, days before the War began, “...we believe [Saddam Hussein] has in fact reconstituted nuclear weapons.**

**The White House had to have known that not even the exaggerated National Intelligence Assessment made such a claim.**

**But no one corrected the record until six months later when the Vice-President again appeared on Meet the Press.**

**4. Consider the error-filled testimony of Secretary of State Powell, with C.I.A. Director Tenet sitting behind him in the U.N. Security Council to lend added credibility to the assertions.**

**I, personally, sat in the Security Council and listened to the Secretary make his very long, detailed explication of Iraq's weapons and terrorist ties, virtually not one assertion of which has been born out by the facts.**

**Aluminum tubes, centrifuge magnets, decontamination trucks, mobile weapons labs, al Qaeda camps, sarin gas, botulinin toxin— all of it was wrong.**

**At best.**

**And this from a man who at Davos the week before told the blue ribbon guests and the media that**

**“the United States has earned the trust of men, women and children around the world.”**

**There is more Botulinin Toxin (Botox) in the Upper East Side of Manhattan than in Iraq.**

**Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was certitude itself, e.g., “We know where they (WMD) are. They are in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad...” (March 30, 2004, ABC television)**

**5. Consider the explanation given by Paul Wolfowitz, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence, that the Administration put the emphasis on WMD because bureaucratically that was the one issue they could all agree on.**

**Against that background, consider the report of the Independent, prestigious Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:**

- in Iraq, WMD was not an immediate threat**
- Inspections were working**
- Terrorism connection was missing**
- War was not the best or only option**

**That was precisely the view of the**

**Comment [1]:**

**Government of Canada –and of many others**

**Consider the conclusions of the report  
published a couple of weeks ago by the *US Army War***

***College:***

- ! The invasion of Iraq was a strategic error.**
- ! It was a distraction in the war on terrorism.**
- ! The war on terrorism is un-winnable – we  
should redefine our objective and focus on Al-  
Qaeda.**

**Precisely my own view.**

**Finally, consider the testimony of David  
Kay, the chief U.S. weapons inspector:**

**"I don't think they existed," Kay told  
Reuters in a telephone interview. "What everyone  
was talking about is stockpiles produced after the  
end of the last (1991) Gulf War and I don't think  
there was a large-scale production program in the**



'90s,"

Nor is the current spin accurate that everyone believed that Saddam Hussein had WMD.

The U.N. weapons inspectors never reached that conclusion; Hans Blix never precluded that there were such weapons, but never precluded there weren't, either

All the while they prepared for the war, the neo-cons in the U.S. Administration, and their allies in the media and think-tanks deprecated the U.N., especially the weapons inspectors.

Richard Perle, until this Spring the Chairman, and now still a member, of the US Defence Policy Board, saw two benefits to the war in Iraq: the disappearance of Saddam Hussein and the end of the United Nations, at least of its idea of collective security.

“Thank God for the death of the UN” he wrote in the Guardian, last March.

We should remind ourselves at this point both that Perle is an influential

advisor to this Administration and that an effective U.N. is a vital Canadian interest.

It is not clear whether we are seeing a secular  
change in the U.S. or a pendulum swing.

What about the Human Security argument?

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What does it matter? SH was a bad man?

\*\*\*

In these circumstances, what should we, and  
especially the Canadian Government, do?

Here are 10 do's and don'ts for a successful,  
or at least self-respecting, modus operandi with the  
United States, especially with the Bush administration.

1. Do recognize and respect the USA's  
qualities and strengths

- ! the Economy
- ! the Arts
- ! Academics
- ! Science
- ! the Military
- ! as a benign neighbour,

2. Don't be Anti-American;

anti-Americanism is unworthy

But do understand that the Bush Admin is not just another Republican Government  
and be cautious and don't presume that there

will be a second Bush term, and certainly don't do anything to facilitate that result.

! Bear in mind that there are many Americas; no monolithic foreign policy

- ! USA is a target
- ! USA is also profoundly divided
- ! Be civil; name calling is cheap
- ! No prospective counterweight

### 3. Do Be Circumspect About American Foreign Policy and about U.S. Power

Big Country = Big Successes

- ! WW II
- ! Korea
- ! Containment/Defeat of Communism
- ! Stability in NW Pacific
- ! First Gulf war

But also Big Mistakes

- Iran
- Chile
- Central America, Dominican Republic
- Vietnam
- Iraq II;

Remember that the U.S. is not fundamentally

a peace-loving nation; seems often to be at war; c.f.,

European Union

### 5. Don't Blame Canada

- Values are diverging
- ! Neo-Cons -- radical;  
No conspiracy; open --New  
American Century Project

**Iraq war; do not shrink from  
seeing what you are seeing; c.f.,  
Richard Perle's advice on Soviet  
weapons**

**6. Do Manage Relations**

- ! Don't let matters just take their course**
- ! Cabinet Committee on US affairs good,**
- ! but... subjecting foreign policy objectives to  
bilateral filters undermines both**
  
- ! U.S. National Security doctrine is a real  
problem; it can undermine Canadian interests**
- ! and don't expect beanbag; in fact, do expect beanball and brush-backs**
  - ! removal of Chilean, Mexican, Costa Rican and Mauritius Ambs.**
  - ! Pressure on Germans, others**
  - ! Complaints about PH**

**6. Do Understand What Works With Washington**

- ! An effective foreign policy gets respect; do be useful**
- ! Sycophants are taken for granted**
- ! But, limits -- French—psychotic reaction**

**7. Do Invest in Personal Diplomacy and public diplomacy**

- ! 24 Hours in the President's day**

**! remember that good relations are exceptional**

**8. Do communicate**

**9. Do Make Own Decisions**

**! Choice vs Price**

**! No amount of spin can change this record**  
**! Anti-Americanism vs Anti-American Foreign Policy**  
**! If Americans re-elect –complicit**

**Senator Helms, US Congress and Neo-Cons notwithstanding**

**Not clear whether Bush II agrees or not.**

**Certainly there is plenty of evidence that some leading  
members of his Administration, notably Vice-President Cheney,**