

MUNK CENTRE MONITOR

IEWS, NEWS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS FROM THE MUNK CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

MUNK CENTRE
FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

AT TRINITY COLLEGE



VIEW FROM THE DIRECTOR

JANICE GROSS STEIN

HOW UGLY IS FAILURE? INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE WRECKING BALL

The French "non" to the European constitution is sending shock waves throughout Europe. It seems almost inconceivable that one of the founding nations of the European Common Market could put the brakes on the building of new European institutions. Angry French voters did just that, however, and Europe has woken up the morning after with a bad hangover. Where is Europe going, its architects are asking. Does Europe have a future? Are we seeing the end of the dream of a united Europe? The heated European rhetoric about its future seems somewhat overblown to those who listen from afar.

Europeans, not unlike other parts of the world, tend to think that their challenges are unique. A similarly anxious conversation is also going on in New York at the United Nations. Here too, the rhetoric is overblown. Here too, the conversation is preoccupied with institutional dilemmas, rather than practical possibilities.

The United Nations, even some of its strongest defenders argue, is in crisis. The Secretary-General, badly wounded by the oil-for-food scandal, is unable to lead. The United States sees the UN as ineffective at best and as an irritating obstacle at worst. There is deadlock and pessimism about the most important items on the global agenda: the Millennium Development Goals are unlikely to be met by 2015; the review conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was a dismal failure – delegates spent three-quarters of their time discussing process and only got to the real issues in the last week; and serious reform of the Security Council and the General Assembly seems unlikely. Everything in New York is on hold. There is institutional paralysis. Is the United Nations about to sink into irrelevance?

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A Summit of Pride and Influence?

Canada and the Gleneagles G8

COVER STORY BY JOHN KIRTON

Can we really develop Africa, control climate change, stop nuclear proliferation and produce secure, sustainable development for all in the world? The United Nations will take its best shot in September, when the leaders of its almost 200 members assemble in New York to figure out how to meet their currently unattainable Millennium Development Goals. But their success will depend critically on the work of a smaller, more select Summit taking place sooner. On July 6-8 the leaders of the world's major democracies gather in Gleneagles, Scotland, for their annual Group of Eight (G8) meeting, together with some carefully chosen developing country guests.

How Canada performs at Gleneagles on these issues matters. It could do much to determine the future of global sustainable development and Canada's influence in protecting its national interests and values.



Dealmaking on the golf course: Gleneagles, setting for the G8 Summit.

If Canada's Prime Minister wants to succeed at Gleneagles, he will have to quickly put in place bolder, better policies than the government's recent International Policy Statement proposed.

The G8 has produced some striking successes since the leaders of France, the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan and Italy gathered for their first annual encounter in November 1975. Since their first appearance in 1976, Canadian leaders have made an important contribution on issues close to the Canadian soul. North-South dialogue was advanced by Pierre Trudeau as host at Montebello, Quebec, in 1981.

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EVENTS TO WATCH FOR

AND
DISTINGUISHED LECTURERS

JUNE

*The U.S. Civil War:
Causes and Consequences*
June 10 - 11

Japan as a Normal Country
The 2005 Shibusawa North
American Seminar, June 18 - 19

SEPTEMBER

*Modernity in Question:
Montesquieu and His Legacy*
Sept. 9 - 10

OCTOBER

Labour Feminism Conference
Sept. 30 - Oct. 1

*The Second Annual
Lipset Lecture*
With Francis Fukuyama Oct. 19

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CANADA AND THE GLENEAGLES G8

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Brian Mulroney, with Dr. Sylvia Ostry as his personal representative, or "sherpa," inaugurated debt relief for the poorest when they held the Summit in Toronto, in part on the University of Toronto campus, in 1988. Under Jean Chrétien, the Summit produced historic advances in environmental protection in Halifax in 1995 and in African development and nuclear non-proliferation in Kananaskis in 2002. By backing such initiatives with targeted actions and billions of dollars in cash commitments, the G8 has proven itself to be an effective forum for progress, rather than a platform for well-meaning rhetoric.

Will British Prime Minister Tony Blair live up to this legacy as host this year? While Blair has just won an historic third majority, his support for Bush's 2003 war in Iraq helped slash his margin of victory, and the month he took off to campaign has made the preparations for Gleneagles frustratingly late. Still, Blair is one of the very few leaders to host the Summit for a second time. He will welcome the same group of G8 leaders, save for Martin, for an unprecedented five years in a row.

Blair identified his agenda a year and a half ago. It centres on Africa (sub-Saharan Africa is the only region that has become poorer in the last generation) and climate change, caused by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Blair has stubbornly stuck with this agenda, set aggressive but achievable objectives, created an influential African Commission to push his case, mounted an intense schedule of lead-up G8 ministerial meetings and bilateral summit visits, and invited the right developing countries, notably China, India, Mexico, Brazil and South Africa, to Gleneagles as guests. The British have also consulted intensively with civil society, in part through the session held by British sherpa, Sir Michael Jay, and Canadian sherpa, Peter Harder, at the Munk Centre on April 8th (see webcast at www.g8.utoronto.ca).

Bush: A potential wild card

Yet if Blair is to succeed, he must bring on board the G8's leading sustainable development skeptic, American president George W. Bush.

Bush will arrive self-confidently sporting the G8's strongest currency and growth rate, the biggest new electoral victory and the glow of hosting a productive G8 Summit at Sea Island, Georgia, last year. Bolstered by recent triumphs for democracy in Ukraine and Georgia, Bush could well want the G8 to stay focused on his Sea Island crusade of bringing freedom to the broader Middle East. Iran's



Shoulder to shoulder here: G8 sherpas Peter Harder (Canada) at left, and Michael Jay (U.K.) discuss the upcoming G8 summit at a Munk Centre event.

nuclear sabre-rattling or more Middle East terrorism might also bring back the divisive ghost of Iraq.

Still, Bush owes one to Blair, Italy's Berlusconi and Japan's Koizumi, who also put boots on the ground in Iraq and who are committed to promoting sustainable development. So is much of Bush's Christian evangelical base, which wants to stop genocide in Darfur and the rapacious exploitation of an earth that they feel belongs to God, not man. Bush himself knows that poverty in Africa can breed terrorism against America. He also knows that he needs a coordinated program of international energy conservation to control America's rising energy insecurity, gas prices, inflationary pressures and current account deficit. While some of his ideologues may dream of turning Saudi

Arabia into a secure petro-democracy, as a realist Texas oilman, Bush knows that supply-side solutions lie more in the barrels-in-hand in Canada, Russia, Mexico, and Nigeria, whose leaders are all conveniently assembled at the Gleneagles G8.

An Agenda for Canada

To bring Bush and his G8 friends together politically, Canada should act fast. Canada's political

leaders, pre-occupied with their own domestic political and national unity distractions, should remember two things. First, Canadians care deeply about Africa, the world's only other bilingual English-French political space full of fellow family members in the Commonwealth and La francophonie. Second, for the past 15 years almost all Canadians have always chosen global environmental protection as their first foreign policy priority.

Some cautious Canadians may want to wait until September, when Canada's international initiatives in nearby New York might be more visible to the voters back home. But while Canadians, as idealists, worship the broadly multilateral United Nations when they relax on the weekends, as realists they count on the G8 to do the difficult jobs in a dangerous world during the work

week. Canadians expect their leaders to deliver at the G8 Summit the global public goods that reflect Canada's national interests and its distinctive national values of democratic multiculturalism, global environmental protection and nuclear non-proliferation.

To forward these values at Gleneagles, Canada needs better policies than those its International Policy Statement proclaimed. On development, Canada should turn the G8 from fruitless debates about pledging 0.7 percent of GDP to official development assistance at some distant date and toward delivering more money now to support good governance, private sector development and trade liberalization with recipients committed to making international assistance work. It should also offer far more than the "responsibility to protect" principle, backed by 100 or so unarmed Canadian military observers, to stop the genocide in Darfur. On global environmental protection in the post-Kyoto era, Canada should impose an initial one-dollar a ticket "sustainable departure" tax on all international airline passenger flights leaving Canada, and pioneer a new World Environmental Organization to promote sustainable development as an integrated whole. To combat nuclear proliferation, and a now obsolete culture of nuclear deterrence, Canada should support permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council for Japan and Germany, fellow G8 democracies that are the world's second- and third-ranked powers and that share the anti-nuclear sustainable development values so close to Canadians' hearts. If the government puts its mind to it, Canada could actually produce, rather than merely proclaim, a foreign policy of pride and influence, with a Gleneagles performance as the first step.

Professor John Kirton is Director of the G8 Research Group, a global network of scholars, students and professionals founded at the Centre for International Studies when Canada hosted the G7 Summit in 1988.