

PREFACE

Francis Fukuyama's much maligned and poorly understood essay about reaching "the End of History" has if nothing else, provided a vivid and telling allegory of the turbulent times international relations theorists and foreign policy practitioners have not only endured, but also struggled to make sense of since the end of the Cold War. The post-September 11th world and its 'new security agenda,' the grasp of which we find ourselves in today, suggests that there still may be a few chapters left to write before 'mankind's wagon train pulls into the Western town of universal liberal democracy,' or indeed whether or not this is actually where the wagon train is or should be heading.

The world community today finds itself in a deadly struggle along the vertical international axis between those who would strive towards and embrace liberal democracy - the Western 'capitalist' world - and those who would shun this system in favour of more 'historical' and traditional forms of social structure - al Qaeda and the terrorists of primal fundamentalism. Around this axis are the crises the 'global village' grapples with on a daily basis.

However, there is another equally dangerous conflict of tectonic friction going on simultaneously, between those who have very different conceptualisations about how the 'religion' of liberal democracy itself should operate within our now globalised Western world. This ongoing internal struggle within the West is between those who see democracy and liberal principles as a 'just' system of governance which is employable on a world-wide scale – multilateralists – and those who see 'arithmetic' democracy as a threat to the liberal values enshrined within the Westernised democratic state itself, meaning the system is applicable only on a domestic scale and is a set of values more or less held in common between inviolable sovereign states – unilateralists.

This struggle represents the 'how' by which the global village grapples with the daily crises of the world, and tragically this struggle saps the strength from which these crises themselves are dealt with. This conflict along the horizontal scale of international affairs has generated one of the most contentious and divisive disagreements of our times for the community of 'united nations' in terms of how to deal with immediate worldwide problems like terrorism or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This, in essence, represents the debate between

unilateralism and multilateralism in statecraft, and for Canadians who are so dependent upon a stable and orderly international environment to say nothing of living adjoined to the world's 'favourite' hyperpower, where Canada *must* fit into this debate is a question of pressing urgency.

It is precisely this conundrum that spurred Dr. Michael Ignatieff to write his provocative article, *Canada in the Age of Terror – Multilateralism Meets A Moment of Truth*, which first appeared in the IRPP's magazine *Policy Options* in February of 2003. The article was widely read among the 'internationalists' and foreign policy community in Canada, striking a powerful chord with readers as succinctly identifying the core aspects of the contemporary Canadian debate about this country's role in the world; so much so that it was subsequently reprinted later as an editorial in one of Canada's national newspapers, *The National Post*, on the 14th of February 2003.

Reaction to the article and the issues it raised, from the legitimacy of Canada amongst the international community to how this country might influence the changing world enveloping it, or whether or not our neighbour to the south was an imperial power (or even a source of good in the world) to how that colossus's ongoing 'war against terrorism' would impact the Canadian 'fire-proof house,' all served to captivate foreign policy debates from the classroom to the corner coffee house. Nowhere was the debate more lively than along the corridors of Dalhousie University, between the mirror faculties of the Political Science Department and International Development Studies, and amongst the Research Fellows of the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies itself. While the conversations were often heated and seldom achieved consensus, without question the one thing all concerned could agree upon was that the next 'issue' for the CFPS' issue and debate series of monographs had been found.

This edition, *Independence in an Age of Empire: Assessing Unilateralism and Multilateralism*, represents the second monograph in this unique series of books utilizing the 'issue and debate format' for exploring pivotal issues in Canadian Foreign, Security and Defence policies. This adopted style allows the treatise to serve as an engaging forum of exchange between internationally recognised experts on the chosen topic, who not only identify the most pressing issue of the day but also establish the wide-sweeping questions and components, explicit and implicit, which surround the issue. This dynamic process, conveniently presented to the reader in one volume, provides a more holistic understanding of the questions Canadians, and their policy makers, face and how they interrelate with each other. The comprehensive understanding of each other's positions in a debate

regarding such complicated and interconnected issues as this one means that not only does 'the other' achieve a stronger voice in the public policy process, but also that the more precise understanding achieved from this dialogue facilitates a studied and inclusive basis from which to manage critical global issues such as terrorism. This is the genesis from which an applicable policy response can be formulated and implemented, as a unified front offers strength in a highly competitive and internationalised world. This also serves the primary objective of the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies and this publication series, which is to facilitate a more explicit and direct exchange of views, positions and opinions regarding specific debates and empirically confirm or repute what is all too often accepted as 'conventional wisdom' in Canada.

The first issue of this series, *The Canadian Forces and Interoperability: Panacea or Perdition?* which came out in the Fall of 2002, was extremely well received by the 'practising community' surrounding the milieu of military interoperability and by the general public. So successful was it that within hours of the monograph coming back from the printing department, over a dozen copies had already been sold through the CFPS' web-site and within weeks a second printing of the book had to be hurriedly ordered. This 'flagship' of the new series demonstrated that for a public acutely interested in Canada's Foreign and Defence affairs, there was a great deal more involved in specific issues such as interoperability than simply elements of the Canadian Forces operating alongside their American cousins. There were technological issues to be considered and addressed along with funding, allocation and force development aspects to the topic, there were alarming considerations suggested about the always-sensitive topic of Canadian sovereignty, institutional implications in terms of determining Canada's relationship to operational commands such as NORAD and the multitude within NATO in addition to how the new Northern Command in the United States would affect Canada, and not least of all how interoperability itself would affect Canada's stance in the world politically and how this practice might impact the perception of Canada as a nation by others abroad. In this respect, the second monograph of this issue and debate series is certainly no different from that of its predecessor, as the practice of multilateralism and unilateralism in Canadian Foreign Policy is infinitely more complex than originally might have been believed. The topic of multilateralism and unilateralism has certainly sparked no less passion or diversity of responses from its contributors than that of the initial interoperability issue.

The 'root' cause of such intellectual passion and the crafting of methodically calculated arguments in response to the issue article by Dr. Ignatieff stems from

two factors: first is the innovative format the book is presented in; and the second and most important factor is those who are selected and asked to contribute to the volume. The format presents the issue chapter, chosen for its prescience and clarity in identifying and communicating contemporary subjects of great importance to mainstream audiences, as Part One of the book which is then followed immediately by the debate sections of Part Two which systematically outline the parameters of the debate and its associated issues. The result is an interconnected and comprehensive exchange from left and right of the political spectrum, discussing the empirical and the normative dimensions of the topic which exist, and most importantly the identification of the potential implications for Canadians.

This all-important second factor, which creates the rigour of such analysis, is derived entirely from the calibre of the contributors solicited to partake in the debate. The participants are selected from among the best of media analysts and journalists, government officials and civil servants, policy makers and practitioners both past and present, and from academia who so often serve as the intellectual bridge between those who govern and those who are governed. As we live in a shrinking and increasingly interconnected world, how others in the international community see Canadians is becoming as increasingly important as how we Canadians see ourselves. Thus, the list of those solicited to participate is an international one, to ensure the debate is neither ‘narcissistic’ nor deluded but rather embraces as many perspectives on the specific debate as possible to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

Like this series’ first edition, *Independence in an Age of Empire: Assessing Unilateralism and Multilateralism* has embraced this unique methodology and format to present a thorough discussion of the issues surrounding the eclipsing topic of ‘unilateralism versus multilateralism’ in international affairs and Canadian Foreign policy. The contributors represent some of the world’s foremost experts on the subject and some of the most widely respected political commentators, ranging from as close as Canada and the United States to as far away as Brazil, the United Kingdom, and even New Zealand. In an age of potential empire and certain terrorism, no serious and meaningful debate addressing an issue of such magnitude as how we deal with our collective problems, could be complete which aspired to less.

