

Kim Campbell examines Canada's role as ally



Former prime minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Kim Campbell, currently visiting professor of practice at the John F. Kennedy School of Government (Harvard University) recently gave a lecture to a packed auditorium at York's Glendon College. Her address was entitled "The 21st Century – Where is John Holmes when we need him?"

The following account was submitted to YFile by Guy Larocque, manager of external affairs, Office of the Principal, Glendon College.

During her address, former prime minister of Canada Kim Campbell, right, spoke about the role Canada could play in the shaping of a new world order and in the context of possible war with Iraq. She touched on highlights of past accomplishments of Canadian foreign policy, all of which bore the mark and style of John W. Holmes, one of the founders of the United Nations.

Canada has to take more responsibility as an ally and invest more in its military capability to remain a significant player in the field, said Campbell. She said this would give more weight to its diplomatic initiatives as the country seeks compromise towards morally-justified, legally-legitimate and politically-unified action.

By no means is it easy to balance our desire to stop actions we find morally reprehensible, with the respect of the principle of self-determination and the maintenance of peace, security and stability at the global level, Campbell said.

(From left: Glendon College Principal Ken McRoberts, Kim Campbell and Glendon international studies Professor Stanislav Kirschbaum)

More and more, Campbell warned, the US Government stands alone as a world military power, as Canadians and Europeans have more or less rejected the ambition to play an active role at that level. Russians are no longer able to act and that leaves American military might unchecked. This unchecked



military power is becoming a most destabilizing factor in world politics as many American leaders – not necessarily American public opinion – feel they can use such power with almost absolute impunity.

In the end, Canadians have to realize that they can play an active role, said Campbell, but they have to assume more responsibilities, otherwise their voices risk remaining unheard.



Campbell fielded a large number of questions from the floor afterwards.

Kim Campbell served as Canada's 19th and first female prime minister in 1993. She previously held cabinet portfolios as minister of state for Indian affairs & northern development, minister of justice & attorney general, and minister of national defence & veterans" affairs.

Campbell was the first woman to hold the justice and defence portfolios, and the first woman to be defence minister of a NATO country. She participated in major international meetings including the Commonwealth, NATO, the G-7 Summit and the United Nations General Assembly. Prior to her current position, Campbell completed a four-year term as consul general of Canada in Los Angeles, serving the states of California, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii and the Territory of Guam.

The annual John Holmes Memorial Lecture honours the late John W. Holmes, O.C., Canadian diplomat, writer, administrator and teacher who was a professor of international relations at Glendon College from 1971 to 1981.

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