



Look Ahead from the National Director

John Ralston Saul and Caroline Andrew capture the goals and spirit of the work to come.

Our task is help find ways to insert citizens into the debates and the foreign policy system. It is also to help strengthen and bring together the two key sources of policy ideas: civil society and the bureaucracy.

In our second year we have some new building tasks. First is to provide real, meaningful and timely feedback to those outside government who contribute ideas and work to foreign policy making. All of those who undertook policy development projects last year did so on good faith, good faith that their work would be given thoughtful attention, that it would enlarge available policy options and contribute to policy thinking. We must report policy developments and responses to that work.

Second, inside the system, there is a need to bring together various policy making operations. We want civil society policy options to have greater impact.

The Parliamentarians who studied child labour last year recommended a role for the Centre in future child labour policy work. This was most welcome. A high priority in the new year is closer work with Parliamentarians. They have an important role in foreign policy thinking and policy making and serve a vital democratic role in our society. In many ways they are the leading members of civil society.

We have already made efforts to ensure that the views of business, especially small and medium sized business, are included. I am especially grateful to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce for the several events they have organized and for their advice. We will work with the Chamber and others to make sure business views are included in multisector discussions.

Canadian Nobel Laureate, John Polanyi, recently advocated a stronger social responsibility and public policy role for Science. We are supporting Professor Polanyi in a Bosnia peacebuilding project and will look for other opportunities to engage Science in foreign policy making.

We are also committed to continuing to build our cross-Canada policy community network with special attention this year to Youth, Indigenous Peoples and the North.

Our ongoing tasks include support for the Advisory Board and an agreement with the Board Chair, Janice Stein, to help the Board be even more active and engaged. We would like to bring to the Centre foreign policy scholars/activists, especially the new generation, to engage in policy development work.

We are all in a great century-end experiment in redefining citizenship, public and private life and society and state relations. New elements of citizenship have recently emerged including environmental stewardship, responsibility to future generations, a role for youth and children in public policy and the value of multi-ethnicity. New technologies, global communications and the power of mass media raise important questions. It is an exciting time and opportunity.

Finally, the future of Canada remains a prevailing theme for all of us who respect the past accomplishments and believe in the future possibilities of our society. As well, Canada is important to the world, a world desperately trying to overcome division, bloodshed, centuries of murderous injustice and present day crimes and hatreds. Canada and Canadian foreign policy are sometimes important simply for the fact that we are Canadian. We hope that our work will contribute to that and to our being Canadian.

Please get in touch if you would like any of our papers, more information, or if you have ideas and views to share.

"the public sector and interest groups have been the two major sources of policy innovation throughout Canadian history. .. Be on the lookout for new ideas. When you read or hear some group's suggestions for alternative public policies, pay attention. Don't just laugh or dismiss them as some special interest trying to get a deal from the overfat state. Think of them rather as issues struggling to exist. Nurture them; we need them."

*Caroline Andrew
Dean of Social Sciences,
University of Ottawa*



"One of our greatest needs today is to find ways, even simple mechanisms, that will help us the citizenry to get into the public debate. It is therefore a matter of inserting the citizen into the system in whatever way we can."

*John Ralston Saul
The Unconscious Civilization*