

extraordinarily ambitious, and there is little evidence that we as Canadians, or even we and our allies taken together, are really willing to spend the resources required to implement it, much less to stay the course for as long as it takes. This has been transparently true even in Haiti, notwithstanding the fact that the Haitian diaspora in Quebec gives our politicians self-serving reasons to do the job properly. It has also been true in Somalia. It is certainly true in the Sudan. It was tragically true in Rwanda. And in spite of the contrary rhetoric that we now hear almost daily from our political and military leaders, there is a very good chance that it will prove to be true as well in Afghanistan, into parts of which our allies already fear to tread. Even now, there is evidence of our quietly contemplating ways of making contributions that might serve as reasonably dignified alternatives to indefinite military deployments.

The history of these sometimes melancholy performances thus points directly to a troubling, inconvenient but clearly inescapable reality, which is that the Comprehensive Social Engineering Model we have in mind cannot work, even in theory, without extensive investments over a very long period of time across a dauntingly impressive range of public service endeavours, and these are investments that we are not prepared to make. If anyone doubts me on this, I invite you to read the "strategic focus" section of the paper in the 2005 *International Policy Statement* that was devoted to development assistance. Iorart understand, of course, that this may have been consigned to the dust bin along with other leavings of a now-defunct government, but the paper offers as clear an exposition of the model we are considering as can be found anywhere, and the range of initiatives that it identifies as crucial to the process is nothing if not overwhelming. No one, I assume, thinks that Canada has a hope of completing such a transformational enterprise – in *any* country – all by itself. But it seems to me that there is little prospect of our successfully completing one in coalition with others, either. We are simply not prepared to put that much into it.

*Problem 3 – The Model requires our doing things we don't know how to do.* But even if we were, a third problem would still present itself. It arises from the fact that we wouldn't know how to do the job even if we had a sufficiently serious will to try. In the middle 1980s, Canadian elites (I have often argued) largely gave up the attempt by public policy means to make the economy of Cape Breton 'take off' (along with the economies of other