

---

the Norwegians—have specialized in peace-making, through the Oslo process and the Sri Lankan processes, so we should specialize in a policy framework that brings all our “governance” activity together in a single powerful program of action.

I prefer “peace, order and good government” to “governance” as an organizing frame for Canadian activities simply because it articulates a specifically Canadian expression of what governance ought to be about: democratic institutions, federalism, minority rights guarantees, linguistic pluralism, aboriginal self-government and a positive, enabling role for government in economic and social development.

Such a proposal is more than a slogan or marketing device. It implies, first, accepting an analytical priority for the role of good government in promoting equitable development and sustaining democratic development. It implies, second, that Canada’s traditions and institutional memory give us a comparative advantage in relation to other countries. It implies, third, that we are willing to harness the dispersed “good government” capacity currently spread right across the federal government.

Not all of this “good government” work is done by government itself. Some of the most exciting work is done by NGO’s that receive some government support, for example, the Forum of the Federations. Bob Rae and other members of the Forum have been deeply involved in the Sri Lankan peace negotiations, attempting to flesh out what a federalist solution to the Sri Lankan tragedy might look like. In northern Iraq, Kurdish experts look to Canadian precedents and the Federation’s advice when considering how to craft a federalist model for the future of Iraq.

At this point, a skeptic might well ask whether our institutional experience can actually be transferred to societies that have lacked our unique advantages: a history of benign colonial rule, early independence, vast natural resource wealth, a wealthy and powerful neighbour, and so on. History matters, our history has been different, and we cannot assume that Canadian best practice, in federalism or any other field of good government can simply be exported to very different societies. Moreover, as a people who secured their freedom from an empire, we know that it is a form of imperialism to base policy