

PANEL ONE: GLOBAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

The lead presenter, as well as moderator, of this panel was Prof. Alfred van Staden (Clingendael), who began by noting that at least one major aspect of the Canada-Dutch special relationship stemmed from the part played by the Canadian Army in the liberation of the Netherlands in 1945, but the ties went beyond that historical legacy. Not so long ago, it was common for many in the Netherlands to conceive of "like-minded" groups and countries as constituting a pillar of Dutch foreign policy, and in this category Canada regularly figured. However, continued Prof. van Staden, one no longer hears much reference to the "like-minded," leading him to ask whether it might be possible and worthwhile to resuscitate the category.

He went on to observe that the theme of this seminar, namely "security," could not have been more well-chosen given the events of 11 September and their aftermath. More than ever was it necessary to develop a "comprehensive" understanding of security, including and especially the sources of contemporary terrorism. Prof. van Staden confessed to subscribing to the "root-causes" theory of terrorism, one that holds the phenomenon to be a function of feelings of relative deprivation nested in objective socio-economic disparities as between the developed and the developing world. He noted that his analysis was a "far cry" from that of US president George W. Bush, whose recent "axis of evil" speech was said to minimize the importance of socio-economic source(s) of terrorism. Prof. van Staden argued that, in general, Europeans tended toward the "root-causes" understanding, and that this set them at odds with the Americans' assessment of the problem and its origins.

Differing perceptions regarding the origins of the problem have also been reflected in differing responses to terrorism as between the US and the Europeans. Prof. van Staden noted that while in America the attacks have triggered a return, at least in part, to the "Hobbesian" view of the state as the best guarantor of security, the same has not happened in Western Europe, where civil-libertarians have been much more successful than in America in their bid to minimize the impact of counterterrorism legislation on individual liberties. To some degree, this was explicable in terms of the relative impact of the "shock" among Dutch (and other Western European) publics triggered by the 11 September attacks.

On the transatlantic level, the terrorist attacks and their aftermath have also had a differential impact, resulting from America's decision to "go it alone" in the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan, notwithstanding the offers of European Allies to join in the struggle as full participants. NATO Allies' invocation of Article 5 commitments, coupled with NATO's assigning AWACS planes and crews to North America, had only marginal