

Closing Remarks: John Ferris

There is a common belief that we are heading towards a change that will be as significant as what occurred in 2001. There will be a change in power and the way that it's used. There are two different ways of making decisions and they are crashing into each other and this may result in system failure. How far do we have the ability to control events and can we control them?

There are a lot of idiosyncrasies of Canadians, and what is clear is that Canadians don't like to address their attitudes towards interests and power and instead want to think that we are high minded and moral, and don't like to clearly express what our interests are. We also prefer pragmatic solutions and the solutions may contradict our basic attitude. Canadians have never had a clear cut situation where we have had to protect our own national interests with our own natural resources.

When Canadians look to see how they can act upon the world they cannot see this in the way states usually see this. We decided to become active in the world and pay a significant price fairly often to play that role

We used our resources to loan power to other states that we believed would pursue the legal economic and political order that would benefit Canada.

As a general rule we have not used our own national resources to protect ourselves. What this means is that, in this approach, to a turn around in nations and looking at two states with very different decision making patterns we are about to remake their relationship

Realism says that the strong do what they will and the weak do what the must. Canada has been a reminder of the limits of classical realism.

On issues of national interest liberal states act a certain way with liberal states. Canada has done what it wanted to for the last little while. We knew that our reactions were restrained by the need for our actions to follow the needs of the US, who has been quite willing to bully us over economic issues. But the US has behaved with remarkable generosity and did not have to be as pleasant as they were so do we have a crisis?

Is there anything fundamental for us to believe that there is a change in US Canada relations. The greatest conflict of interests lie in the economic sphere where it is possible for us to make decisions that will seriously help our economies and the question of the arctic is an issue that must be dealt with. There is also room for a general win win compromise for Canadians over the arctic and a general win win for circumpolar countries around the arctic

Good neighbors are produced by good fences but good neighbors have common interests and maybe that is what we have today.