



In place of foreign policy: progressive internationalism

Foreign Policy Centre speech by Peter Hain
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Thank you for inviting me here this evening to the Foreign Policy Centre. Stephen has done a great job as director: clearly parliament's loss and Enfield's loss was very much the FPC's gain. No disrespect to the FPC, but I hope that we'll see you back in the Commons before very long.

One of my closest colleagues in politics, Robin Cook, was, of course, a keen supporter of the FPC and one of your patrons. Under the shadow cast by Iraq, Labour's progressive internationalism begun under Robin as Foreign Secretary has been all but forgotten. It was on his watch, for example, that Britain led the battle to secure an international treaty to ban anti personnel landmines; reversed the Tory ban on the right of GCHQ workers to join a trade union; replaced the Tories' rabid Euro-scepticism with a strong pro-European policy; introduced new arms export controls which blocked British defence equipment being used for either internal oppression or external aggression; and put human rights at the heart of what he called a foreign policy with 'an ethical dimension'.

Ours is record which has prioritised making poverty history – most especially in Africa – with a commitment to international development and trade justice unsurpassed in Labour's history and unmatched by any previous British government.

Ours is a record of an unshakeable commitment to tackling climate change through the Kyoto Protocols and the European Union's Emissions Trading scheme.

Ours is a record of resolute action to support democracy and freedom around the world – whether it be in Sierra Leone, Kosovo or Afghanistan.

Labour has always been an internationalist party: whether it be the unflinching Atlanticism of Ernie Bevin or Denis Healey; the passionate Europeanism of Roy Hattersley or John Smith; the unyielding support of anti-colonial struggles and movements shown by Fenner Brockway and Michael Foot; or the courage shown by Jack Jones and George Orwell in fighting fascism in the Spanish Civil War. Unlike David Cameron, no Labour leader will ever have to endure the shame of apologising for the fact that in the struggle for freedom in South Africa their party backed the wrong side. Indeed, my decision to join the Labour party 30 years ago was partly spurred by its commitment to the anti-apartheid cause and its belief that human rights are indivisible.

In our increasingly interdependent world, marrying that internationalist heritage to the progressive goals of the future is more important than ever: recognising that common interests and common problems can only be solved

by collective action; that global stability depends upon global justice; and that we must maintain the left's historic duty to defend human rights and promote democracy around the world.

Globalisation and interdependency

Five years ago, while at the Foreign Office, I wrote a pamphlet entitled *The End of Foreign Policy?* The slightly provocative title was intended to suggest that globalisation and the interdependency which flows from it means that the interests of different nations – and the distinction between the foreign and the domestic – is blurring rapidly, sometimes to vanishing point.

The upshot is simple: the battle for progressive politics on the domestic front cannot be won within national borders alone. And the challenges we face as a nation over the coming decades will not be confined by national boundaries. The main threats to our economy, our security, our health and our general well-being will be global in both origin and impact:

A major global flu pandemic could cause global economic losses of \$800 billion due to knock-on macroeconomic effects;

Migration – with 200 million people (the size of Brazil) now on the move globally every year – places huge strains on the entire domestic agenda from jobs, to housing to race relations;

The pensions of young European workers are likely to depend in part on investments made today in emerging economies such as China and India; And instability in oil exporting countries - adding a \$10 to £15 bbl premium to the price of oil in 2006 - is estimated to cost the UK \$6-9 billion a year.

Globalisation has, of course, also brought in its wake huge opportunities:

- the movement of capital, on which international trade has long depended, is now instantaneous;
- travel across the globe is much easier;
- new forms of communication – linking people separated by thousands of miles and breaking down cultural and political barriers – challenge state censorship and corporate media monopolies alike;
- and the flow of goods and services around the world means that you can now get almost anything, almost anywhere.

But globalisation has also given old problems new opportunities to flourish: environmental pollution; modern day scourges such as HIV, SARS and avian flu; terrorism; organised crime and drug trafficking. These are no respecters of national borders. And they have been given a crucial fillip by easing movement and communication internationally, and leading an environmentally unsustainable rush to growth across the planet.

Thus problems which impact on one side of the globe frequently have their origins on the other. The causes of migration, terrorism or crime in one country often rest with conflict, poverty and disease in another. While the source of environmental disaster and natural catastrophe in one state may be found in the policy decisions and consumer choices of individuals in another. Societies are poisoned by drug warlords who feed off the addiction and

lifestyles of millions of individuals thousands of miles away. Our growing interdependency is self-evident. Not one of these challenges can be met by action in one state alone, even though each will have its role to play. Only collective action globally will work.

Some on the left suggest we should adopt a Canute-like posture, trying to halt the rising tide of globalisation, while some on the right are happy to take its economic benefits, but don't want the social responsibility that goes with it.

The right – with its prejudice for nationalism, protectionism and unilateralism – offers only simple responses to complex problems. Only the progressive left – with its belief in internationalism not isolationism; and multilateralism not neocon unilateralism – can meet the challenges of globalisation.

Stronger international institutions

Just as the challenges presented by globalisation will frequently come from beyond our own borders, so too will the solutions. That's why international institutions and respect for common international rules are more crucial than ever.

The failure of the neoconservatives to grasp this essential truth has been key to both the undermining of its goals and – most damagingly of all – global support for the fight against international terrorism. The victory of the Democrats, our sister party, in the congressional elections last year offers an opportunity for the United States not so much to chart a new course, but to find its way back to its traditional one: the internationalism of Franklin Roosevelt, championed by Jack Kennedy, eloquently espoused by Bill Clinton.

And signs that new thinking might be moving the US in the right direction are already apparent. For example, the bipartisan project on national security – based at Princeton University and chaired by President Clinton's former national security adviser, Tony Lake, and President Reagan's former secretary of state, George Shultz – published its final report last autumn. Under the title 'Forging a World of Liberty Under Law', it rightly acknowledges that 'power cannot be wielded unilaterally, and in the pursuit of a narrowly drawn definition of the national interest, because such actions breed growing resentment, fear, and resistance.'

With our place on the UN Security Council, and our membership of the European Union, G8, NATO, the Commonwealth, IMF, World Bank and the World Trade Organisation, Britain is almost uniquely placed to lead the imperative for effective, global multilateralism by influencing and strengthening these critical international institutions. We must do so.

However, as Tony Blair has argued, 'increasingly, there is a hopeless mismatch between the global challenges we face and the global institutions to confront them'. During the 1990s, the United Nations stood by as genocide was committed in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia. And whatever one's views on the subsequent military action in Iraq, the United Nation's response

in the years following the invasion of Kuwait in 1991 was widely criticised and did not prevent Saddam Hussein oppressing his people.

And today the United Nations is once again failing to act as genocide is committed in Darfur. We should not dissemble: what we are faced with here is a conscious, deliberate and sustained effort by a state to commit mass murder against its own citizens. Over 300,000 people have already been killed; a systematic policy of rape and sexual assault is being carried out; 500 people are dying every day. After Rwanda, we all said 'never again' but it *is* happening again. Despite good intentions, the inability of the UN and the African Union to stop this is inexcusable; the absence of energetic focus by the left intolerable.

The UN cannot do everything, however. Other international institutions matter too, as Europe's progress over the past sixty years demonstrates: the creation of once unimaginable peace and stability across a continent where more wars were fought in recent centuries than on any other; the promotion of democracy and human rights, especially in the former dictatorships of southern and eastern Europe; and the development of a competitive single market in which social justice and environmental standards have been enhanced not diminished.

The European experience is a remarkable story of how, by sharing sovereignty but still retaining identity, nations can work together to confront common challenges, achieve common interests and thereby become stronger. That is why I believe Labour's willingness to show leadership on Europe will become ever more vital. Leading at home by unrelentingly making the case that our membership of the European Union makes Britain stronger, safer, wealthier and greener. And leading in Europe, ensuring that together we look outwards to the challenges of this new century: building a world in which social justice, sustainable development, democracy and human rights are spread ever more widely.

But this means Europe must shape, not just react to, international affairs. In recent years, a common approach from the European Union has indeed been playing an increasingly important role. In international efforts to tackle Iran's nuclear weapons programme, the EU has surpassed that of the United States. But in other respects, the EU has been less influential than it ought to have been.

One of the tragedies of the Iraq conflict was the failure of the European Union to present a united front. As a result, not just the European Union but its member states too have been less able to influence the course of international events. As one of the leading foreign policy powers within the EU, we have a responsibility to show leadership in the development of a stronger common foreign policy with our EU partners. And working more closely with other member states will not just mean a stronger EU foreign policy, but a stronger British foreign policy too. Partnership in Europe emphatically does not make Britain weaker. On the contrary it helps advance British interests in a way we cannot do alone.

So as champions of stronger international institutions, we must also be frank about their shortcomings and must lead the movement for reform.

We must reform the UN Security Council so that its membership reflects the world as it is now, not as it was in the colonial age of 1945. For example, it is absurd that Germany, Japan and India are not permanent members. It is ridiculous that neither Africa nor Latin America has a permanent member. It is also vital that the UN and the EU strengthen the military capability and resource capacity of global regional organisations like the African Union to solve and prevent conflicts: unless this is achieved there will be no regional 'sockets' for multilateral global bodies to plug into and help solve or prevent conflicts like Darfur or Zimbabwe.

Additionally we must recognise that, in today's thankfully less deferential and more democratic world, international institutions will only work – and can only work – if they earn greater public confidence. The first crucial step towards achieving this is closing the transparency and accountability deficit under which too many of them operate.

Social justice and global stability

But stronger international institutions have to be driven by a progressive purpose. Globalisation has brought with it great opportunities for many. But we must now promote a matching ethic of responsibility that ensures that these opportunities are open to all; that helps those struggling to cope with the turmoil and disruption that often accompanies globalisation; and which ensures that growth and development is environmentally sustainable. As President Clinton put it, to build up the positive forces of interdependence and reduce the negative requires three things: 'shared responsibility, shared benefits and shared values'.

For the left, there is nothing particularly radical about this concept. We responded to the Industrial Revolution by insisting that the expansion of opportunity for some needed to be followed by the expansion of responsibility to all. Now is the time to make this same case globally.

The 'globalisation of responsibility' must therefore be the cornerstone upon which we work to promote social justice and sustainable development around the world. And our belief in the necessity of this task springs from the same considerations and the same values that drive us to embrace these values at home: our bedrock attachment to the equality of all, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality, sexuality or disability; and our realisation that injustice and inequality breed despair and social ills which affect us all.

So, internationally, we recognise that an unjust world is a world in which extremism, terrorism, environmental degradation and crime are more likely to flourish and affect us all. Social justice, sustainable development, and global stability are inseparable aims, only attainable by collective action led by the left.

But where must that action begin? The globalisation of responsibility must mean a renewed effort to address the plight of the world's poor. After eighteen years of Conservative cuts, our Labour government has dramatically increased Britain's international aid budget and put us well on track to achieve the UN target of 0.7 per cent of GDP. Gordon Brown and Tony Blair have led the fight to write off billions of debts in the world's poorest countries – pushing the issue, in tandem with the Make Poverty History Coalition, to the top of the G8's agenda during our presidency eighteen months ago. Through Gordon Brown's International Finance Facility, we're leading the battle to raise an extra \$50 billion for proper education and healthcare for children in the developing world. And our Labour Government has also been in the lead to secure a deal based, not just upon free trade, but trade *justice*. It is grotesque for instance that the entire GDP of sub-saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) is equivalent to the protectionist agricultural subsidies of the OECD countries, meaning mainly Europe and the USA. Poor countries need to be able to trade their way into prosperity not be shut out by the rich world acting against them as a protectionist cartel. That means abolition of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy and repeal of similar American legislation.

For the 'Starbucks generation', the benefits of globalisation may be self-apparent; they are less so for the 1.3 billion people who live on less than a dollar a day; for the 30,000 children who die every day due to extreme poverty; or for the 90 per cent of Africans outside South Africa who have no access to electricity. To these people, at best, the promise of globalisation is totally hollow; at worst, globalisation appears to stack already poor odds ever more heavily against them.

The globalisation of responsibility must also mean a renewed effort to tackle climate change. As the Stern review made clear, 'business as usual' could see global temperatures rise by five degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, leading to a five to 20 per cent cut in global living standards. And the evidence for Stern is already indisputable: the ten warmest years on record have all been since 1990. Inaction is simply not an option.

But as Stern also underlined, the costs of climate change are already hitting hardest and earliest on the developing world. And competition for scarce natural resources – which can only worsen with the impact of climate change – threatens future conflict in already unstable regions with further consequences for the rest of us such as mass migration. That's why climate change is also a global social justice issue and a global stability issue.

Furthermore, we won't be able to achieve global cooperation to tackle climate change against a backdrop of ever increasing national competition for energy resources. Indeed, the risk that countries attempt to buy their national energy security at the expense of international climate insecurity is high. China, India and the US, for instance, are all currently planning many new coal power stations; China is building one each week.

But our efforts have been hampered by the failure of western nations to accept that we are, for a large part, responsible for these problems and we should bear the lion's share of clearing them up. That is why it is simply not acceptable for the United States, with 5 per cent of the world's population and 25 per cent of the world's emissions, to opt out. The American people know this. And while the White House today holds rigidly to its approach, the American people are forging a new one: already California, seven north-eastern states and over 300 American cities have pledged to abide by the Kyoto Protocols.

As a matter of urgency, the European Union should invite these new American environmental pioneers to join our emissions trading scheme, as a stepping stone to building a truly global system of emissions trading. Leading the global transition to sustainable development is, I believe, a challenge which the European Union is perhaps uniquely placed to undertake, which is why there's no clearer illustration of the right's inability to understand the dynamic of interdependency than David Cameron's claim to be 'green' while adopting a continuing policy of hostility towards greater European engagement.

And as Europe seeks to develop and promote a low carbon economy, we must also consider our relationship with emerging economies. As a nation, Britain's global carbon emissions amount to only 2 per cent of the world's total. But China's emissions are increasing by that amount every single year. We have to persuade the developing world – China and India in particular – to take decisive action now to curb their emissions.

A stable and growing China is in the interests of all of us. But there is a great risk that its emergence to become the world's second biggest economy will come at a price of irreparable global environmental damage. Acting collectively, Europe can work with China to ensure that this does not happen by helping it to develop 'clean coal' technology and, perhaps, examining whether, in much the same way that is currently being considered for California, China might gain access to the European Emissions Trading scheme.

We must combine the challenge of promoting social justice and confronting climate change by embracing sustainable development – the recognition that we are at present borrowing from our children's future, often with no idea that we are doing so and with no idea of how to repay the debt.

Sustainable development is not about the avoidance of tough choices; but it *is* about making different choices. Sustainable development is not about zero growth; it's about smarter growth and greener growth. In short, sustainable development is about exploiting the massive economic opportunities which arise from the need to restore and maintain our environment.

For example, we should do all we can to help Africa develop and spread the benefits of clean energy technologies, most especially solar and photo voltaic

energy, which is ideally suited to the continent's climate. A fantasy? Not to those where it has already been introduced and who have found themselves with light at night, access to the digital world, fridges to keep medicine and food safe, and who have been empowered by a range of new educational and employment opportunities. We should therefore actively prioritise a policy (for which I secured agreement on behalf of the Government in Botswana at the EU Africa summit in 2000) to divert substantial development funding into a private public partnership with manufacturers to spread micro generation right across Africa: wind, solar, wave and tidal, as a platform out of poverty and into economic self- help for African communities.

Promoting social justice, confronting climate change, advancing global stability: inseparable aims, only achievable by collective global action, the vision of progressive internationalism.

Human rights, liberty and terrorism

Some, of course, feel far more comfortable with Britain's global role being confined to the issues of international development and tackling climate change. We all understand why. But there is no opt-out from the terrorists' target list. This form of fanatical terror does not discriminate between Madrid or New York or Bali or Istanbul or Kenya or Tanzania or, as we found out ourselves so terribly on 7/7, London. And it can only be confronted and defeated by co-ordinated international action.

First, however, it is a myth that international terrorism is simply a response – a straight case of cause and effect – to British and American foreign policy. Terrorism was there long before September 11 and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Those who planned 9/11 were hatching and advancing their evil plot in 2000, at the very moment President Clinton was bringing together Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak in a brave attempt to conclude a comprehensive settlement to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

But tackling terrorism does require a sustained and genuine attempt to tackle the sense of alienation which acts as a breeding ground for terrorism and those who sympathise with it. It demands that we redouble our efforts to bring about a lasting peace in the Middle East, one that can only be attained by justice and an independent state for the Palestinian people, and security and an end to terrorism for the Israeli people. Poverty, despair and a sense of injustice: all these make the fight against terrorism all that much harder.

But let us also be clear: the fight against terrorism is a fight to defend the values which we share – the values of liberty, pluralist democracy, the rule of law, justice, freedom and human rights.

These values are not unique to us; they are not solely 'western' or 'Judaean-Christian' values. They are universal values, enshrined in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We do not seek to impose them on other religions or other regions – for they already share them – we simply seek to defend them from the assault of those who embrace hatred and violence, tyranny and terrorism.

For some on the left, promoting democracy has become indelibly associated with the neoconservative agenda and, by extension, with the war in Iraq. Some deride the notion of extending democracy as the ideology of 'American imperialism', imposing alien ideas on societies with different values and traditions.

But just because some neoconservatives have appropriated our language of democracy and liberty, that does not mean that we should abandon our values.

Democracy, freedom, human rights: these are our values and they are universal values, shared alike by the peoples of Baghdad, Harare, Rangoon and Kabul. 'Use your liberty to promote ours,' says Aung San Suu Kyi. We salute her courage and her dedication. So how can we turn our backs on such her plea? How can we say to a girl wanting school in Kabul, or women wanting to vote in the Gulf, or an Iraqi citizen ignoring the bomb threats and queuing in the early hours to vote, that democracy is for *us*, not *them*? I remember such specious and offensive arguments being deployed by racists preserving apartheid in South Africa. I don't expect them to be advanced by those on the British left who joined with me in fighting apartheid.

If the left abandons the universal causes of democracy, freedom and human rights, then there will be no-one remaining to fight for them. The Conservatives may have suddenly discovered a fancy for trade unionism when *Solidarity* emerged in Poland, but the right's approach has always been partial. Let's not forget the 1980s Tory students (some who now sit opposite me on David Cameron's benches) in their 'Hang Mandela T-shirts'. Or the tea and sympathy doled out by Margaret Thatcher for the murderous Chilean tyrant, General Pinochet. Let's not forget that narrow definition of the national self-interest – espoused as the worst case of mass murder in Europe since the Holocaust occurred – which was epitomised by the last Conservative government's paralysed approach to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The Tories' pained indifference to ethnic cleansing in Europe's backyard contrasted with Labour's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 to prevent it.

But if we are to act, how should we do so? Democracy, freedom and human rights cannot simply be imposed by military might. But we also need to recognise that on occasion, as we did in Sierra Leone and Kosovo, we have had to resort to force in order to defend these vital values. Force should always be the last resort, but we should not flinch from turning to it in the face of ethnic cleansing, gross abuses of human rights, mass murder, and aggressive threats to peaceful neighbouring nations.

A strong, responsive and reformed United Nations is critical here. Interventions should take place within an international legal framework, supported by the UN and backed by appropriate resolutions. But that means the UN being more decisive, less in thrall to vested interests, with a permanently available peacekeeping capability. It also means regional

groupings like the African Union both being granted the resources, and displaying the leadership, to be much more decisive over crises such as Darfur, Zimbabwe and Somalia, or in the case of Asia, taking on the Burmese Junta.

In 2001 the Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty made clear the responsibility of the wider community to act when states fail, or are unable, to discharge their primary responsibility to protect their people from avoidable catastrophes such as mass murder, rape and starvation. This was endorsed by the world's leaders – including Tony Blair – at the 2005 UN world summit. Now, however, the legal framework must be implemented and modernised to reflect the contradiction between sovereignty and the responsibility to protect and to make clearer the options available when large-scale human rights abuses are imminent or already under way.

But we should also recognise that democracy, human rights and freedom need to be rooted in civil society and strong social institutions. We should assist and nurture them, supporting those who stand up for liberal democratic values wherever they may be. For example, in Iraq, the British government has supported the development of trade unions, not simply because we believe in their inherent worth, but also because they provide a much-lacking counter-weight to the evil of sectarianism. This has not simply been the work of government, however. It has been bolstered and furthered by the support of progressives here in Britain, especially the Labour Friends of Iraq and many trade unions.

As we work to promote democracy and human rights in Iran, we also need to be smarter. Iran is not a totalitarian regime; pluralism and democracy, however limited, does exist, and reformers - including the Iranian trade union movement – are working to challenge and confront a reactionary theocracy from within. They need our support.

It's interesting to note, indeed, how the extremists in Iraq and the hardliners in Iran have both focused on murdering and intimidating trade unionists. They know the threat trade unionists represent to those who peddle extremism, hatred and fear. So, as the men of violence target the trade unionists, let's provide them with the assistance that they need. I want to see Britain doing far more globally to promote the cause of trade unionism, recognising it as a powerful force for those democratic values which lie at the heart of progressive internationalism. The same goes for other key civil society groups, like women's organisations, for instance.

Finally, a plea on behalf of Turkey. The road to its accession to the EU may have become a little bumpy, but I am in no doubt, it will be, and should be, clear in the end. We support Turkey's membership of the European Union, not simply because of the obvious strategic and economic advantages, but also because it represents demonstrates the potential of the European Union to extend and entrench democracy, human rights and freedom. We must not now let down the Turkish government and the Turkish people; their efforts to meet the criteria for membership of the EU over the past five years in

particular have been heroic. The enormous prize is a Turkey which acts as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East.

Conclusion

But ultimately, progressive internationalism is not simply about international institutions. Instead, it is about the values and vision with which we seek to animate them. Those values – the recognition and celebration of our interdependence; the pursuit of global social justice; our unbending commitment to democracy, human rights and freedom around the world – are what lie at the core of progressive internationalism. Let's celebrate these values and resolve to put them at the heart of our foreign policy in Labour's next phase of government.

Ends

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