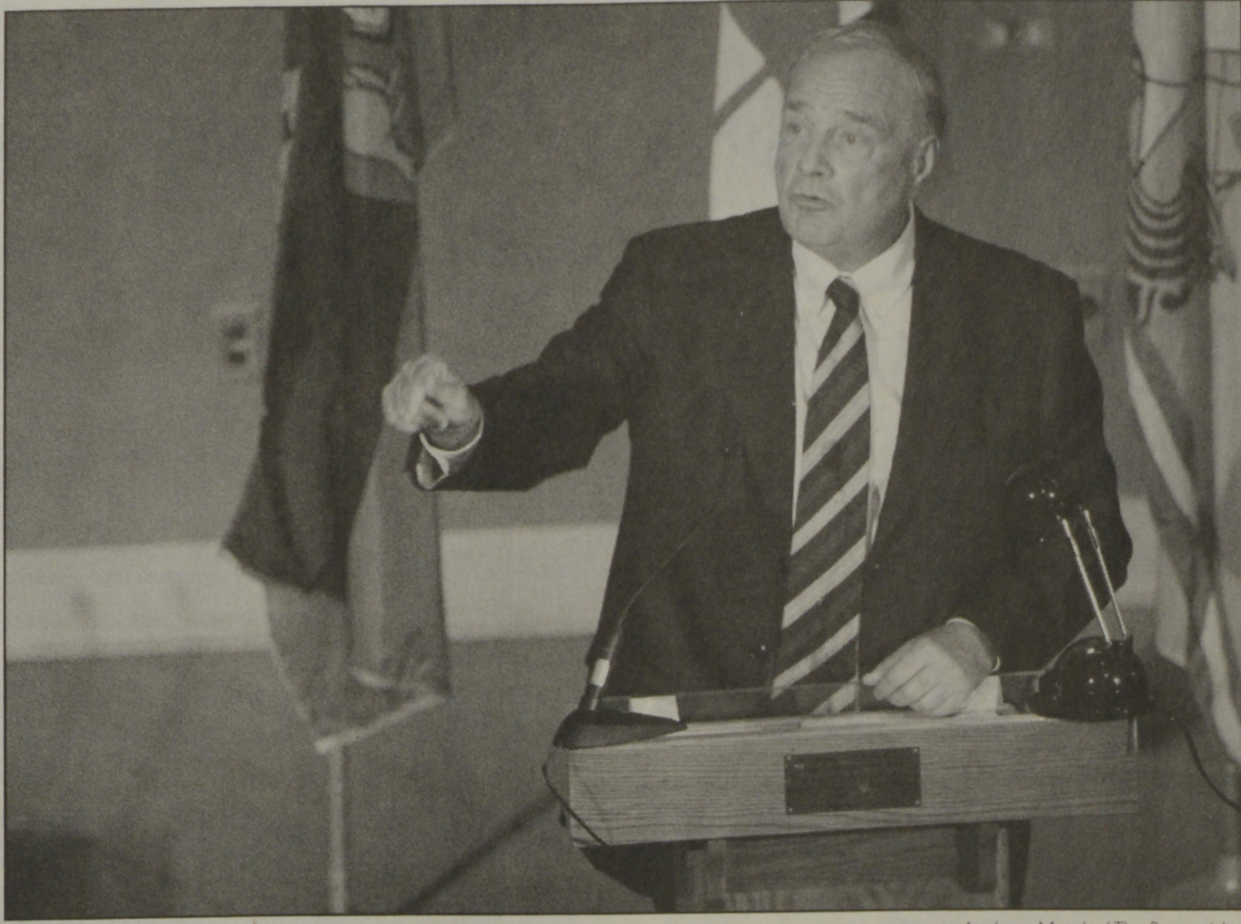


One on one with a former PM: Paul Martin talks to the Bruns

Following last week's Lightbulb Lecture, The Brunswickan sits down with former Prime Minister Paul Martin to discuss international development

by Melanie Bell



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Paul Martin spoke at the inaugural Lightbulb Lecture on March 31st, at the Dineen Auditorium at Head Hall.

The Right Honourable Paul Martin, former Prime Minister of Canada, addressed UNB students and Fredericton residents on March 31. As the inaugural speaker of the Lightbulb Lecture Series, Engineers Without Borders UNB's first sustainable lecture series featuring high-profile speakers, Martin delivered a lecture focused on "How can government and businesses help economic development in Africa?"

Reporter Melanie Bell spoke with Mr. Martin about his involvement and views on international development.

The Brunswickan: With the five consecutive budget surpluses you recorded as Finance Minister, did any of that money go towards Lester B. Pearson's 0.7% pledge?

Paul Martin: Oh yes. We used that money to double our aid to Africa, which we promised to do by 2010, or actually 2008, and then to increase it beyond that. [It also] went to Darfur and a special allocation of 90M of that, as an example, went to AIDS relief. So we doubled our aid to Africa and then on top of that, we put in a whole series of special programs using that money.

B: As of yet, Canada has not reached the 0.7%. What factors have played into that?

PM: Well, initially we had a huge deficit and we had to deal with that. Then, as we came out of that deficit, obviously there were many areas, from education to health care, that were under-funded.

As soon as we got ourselves into a surplus position, we started increasing. We didn't want to increase it all of a sudden and then cut it. We wanted to have a steady series of increases over a 10-15 year period and that's what we're doing.

B: Has your work on the Kelowna

Accord had any influence on your current projects abroad?

PM: Oh yes, it has a tremendous influence. Kelowna is essentially to provide provision—decent education,

not get adequate housing, good education, and good healthcare.

B: I read that you are co-chairing the High Level Advisory Panel of the African Development Bank Group. What

has that experience been like for you and in what capacity have you participated?

PM: I do two things. I co-chair the High Level Panel advising

the African Development Bank. It's the most important African-owned development institution and it's now well-financed, but it's really got to focus very

heavily on the areas where it can have some more influence. We basically said that those are the infrastructural and vocational training needed. The other project I've got is the Congo Rainforest, which is the second largest rainforest in the world, the largest of Africa, and it is being deforested at a rapid rate. It is essentially one of the world's major lungs, in terms of climate change. So we're just getting going on that.

B: What about your work with the African Common Market?

PM: The common market is very important because Africa is basically a bunch of very small countries with very small markets, and what they have to do is give themselves a larger market so they can be much more self-sufficient. I'm spending a lot of time on that.

B: Currently, eastern and southern Africa are involved, yes?

PM: Yes, those are two of the regional associations, and there's a third in western Africa. But the problem is that you've got to bring all of Africa together.

B: What initiatives are you working on towards that?

PM: It's really a question of working with the G8 countries and hopefully convincing them that they've got to participate, along with the richer African countries, in helping the poorer ones in adjusting to a common market.

B: What skills from your jobs as Finance Minister, businessman, Prime Minister, and from all the other different roles that you've played, are you finding most useful for your work in international development?

PM: I think the most important skill is understanding where the other side is coming from. Too often, when dealing with the developing world, we try to impose our own views on them, and I think it's sometimes pretty important to listen to them, because what we sometimes think is just a refusal to act. Really, they've got some very legitimate reasons and problems they have to overcome,

but we can help them.

B: I read on your website that you are involved in the Leaders L20 Forum. In what capacity are you involved in that?

PM: Well, I'm pushing it. The G20 is a group of finance ministers with whom I was formerly very active. When I was Prime Minister, I really felt it should exist at the leaders' level. The G8 is simply too small. It's not representative enough without China and India, so I'm really pushing to see a leaders' 20 created because I think that we cannot deal with the problems of this world unless China, Brazil, South Africa, and Mexico are at the table.

B: What would be your recommendation for students who want to make a difference in terms of international development?

PM: First of all, get an education. Get a very solid education. Then go abroad for a year. Work in another country, even a Third World country and get a feel for the problems so that you understand them. Then, you come back and you can go back into regular life, or you can go with an NGO or go with the government. But I think the most important thing is to get an education and develop an understanding of what it's like in a developing country in reality, not just from books.

B: What's been your own most integral experience in terms of traveling to another country and seeing the reality on the ground?

PM: I think it's visiting Africans where you'll see 30 one-room school houses with 30 chairs to serve anywhere from 6, 7, or 800 kids, to realize that some of those kids walk two hours in the morning and two hours back home at night. They've got huge responsibilities and huge dangers. It's amazing that these kids get an education, but they do. I would say [the best thing] was seeing the tremendous desire of these young people to overcome huge barriers to get an education.

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- PAUL MARTIN

Soldiers: A brotherhood

from *Soldiers* page 1

they were on the edge of their seats waiting to get a phone call such as that one. He and the rest of the base back home knew the realities of the situation and expected they would get a phone call. They had hoped they never would but they expected it nonetheless – but nothing to the extent that it was.

"No one saw it coming, to have six gone like that was completely off the scale," he said.

This was the largest deployment of soldiers from Gagetown since the base was founded in 1958.

A soldier's life, as Owens explained, is one that goes from day to day. Soldiers are handed a mission or task and they simply do it. He feels that tragedies like this one, though sad, help people understand that soldiers are human, too.

"Even for me, I saw the looks when I walked in today (to the Student Union Building in uniform). People looked at me like 'What are you doing here? Why are you here?' Situations like this help

break down the myths surrounding us," he described. "It shows that a soldier could be the person sitting across the table from you, or the person you go to school with, and people are now taking the time to understand us better."

The government plans to have Canadians out of Afghanistan by 2011, and February 2009 is when the next deployment of soldiers will be sent from Gagetown, but as Owens explains, there will always be another mission on which to embark.

Nonetheless, he says that these brave men, who died for something they each believed in, will always be remembered. Every time a soldier falls, their respective unit, fellow soldiers, and broader community takes the hit, explains Owens.

"They will always be in our minds, and we hope that we don't have to go through something like this again," he said. "Every time the phone rings on a weekend or late at night, the first thing I think is, 'Oh God, what now.' They will all be remembered, are all considered part of the forces of brotherhood. They will be missed."

CLARIFICATION

In the article "How safe do you feel on campus?" 46% of students agreed the campus was safe, while 36% strongly agreed the campus was safe. In total 82% of students agreed campus was safe.

Dr. Richard E. Lee Optometrist

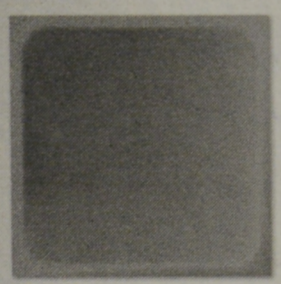
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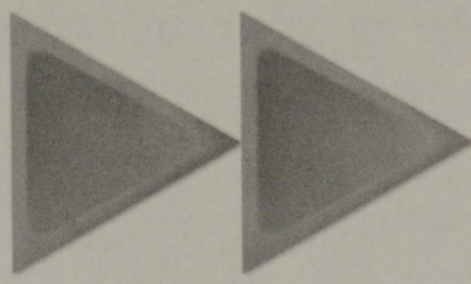
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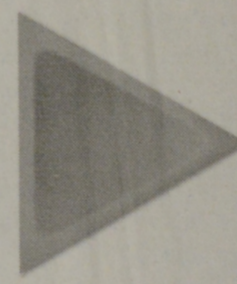
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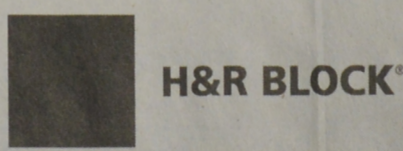


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