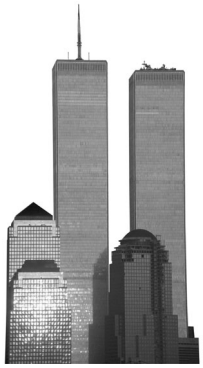
JANICE GROSS STEIN: A MESSAGE HAS ALREADY BEEN SENT



Janice Gross Stein is the Harrowston Professor of Conflict Management and Negotiation and director of the Munk Centre for International Studies, both at the University of Toronto. The author of many books and articles on the Middle East, foreign policy decision-making, and conflict management and resolution, she served as the Chair of the Research Advisory Board to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and is currently a member of the International Security Committee of the American Academy of Science and the Committee on International Conflict Resolution of the National Academy of Sciences. This year she presented the Massey Lectures on CBC Radio. Her subject was "The Cult of Efficiency." She talked with William Watson by telephone on Oct. 13, Thanksgiving Day.

Janice Gross Stein enseigne à l'Université de Toronto, où elle détient la chaire Harrowston sur la gestion et la négociation des conflits et dirige le Munk Centre for International Studies. Elle a publié de nombreux ouvrages et articles sur le Moyen-Orient, la politique étrangère et la gestion des conflits. Ancienne présidente du Comité consultatif de recherche du ministère des Affaires étrangères, elle siège actuellement au comité de sécurité internationale de l'American Academy of Science ainsi qu'au comité de résolution des conflits internationaux de la National Academy of Sciences. Elle a participé cette année aux " Massey Lectures " à la radio de CBC, y livrant une communication sur le " culte du rendement ". William Watson s'est entretenu avec elle le 13 octobre, jour de l'Action de grâces.

William Watson: Where were you when you heard about the attacks on Sept. 11th and what were your first thoughts?

Janice Gross Stein: I was in the car, driving to work. I had just stopped at the post office to send my son a cake by Priority Post. The cake never arrived. I was driving and a friend called me on the cell phone, and told me that the first World Trade Center tower had been hit. And I knew right then.

William Watson: You had no doubt it was a terrorist attack? Mayor Giuliani said he knew on the second hit.

Janice Gross Stein: No, I knew. I knew because it was the World Trade Center. This was unexpected, but not unimagined. Like every other major strategic surprise that we've had over the last century, people were writing about it, talking about the possibility. But there were lists of possibilities. And you can never defend against a list of all the possibilities.

William Watson: What were your first suspicions?

Janice Gross Stein: I tried not to rush to judgement. Because there is always more than one possibility, and you have to wait for some kind of evidence. What struck me, though, was that Ahmed Ressam who was arrested crossing the border from Canada, was being sentenced on Sept. 11th.

William Watson: How long in advance would that have been known?

Janice Gross Stein: Oh, quite a while. It was at least a few weeks.

William Watson: So that if you had something planned, you could fine-tune it for that date.

Janice Gross Stein: Absolutely. But even then, there were still other possibilities.

William Watson: Are you satisfied with the evidence that has now been put forward?

Janice Gross Stein: Yes. What does it mean to be satisfied with the evidence? Am I satisfied that Osama bin Laden himself personally organized, orchestrated and ordered this? Not necessarily. Am I persuaded that the al-Qaeda network, which functions as a loosely organized global network, is responsible? Yes. The analogy I use to describe al-Qaeda is the Ford Foundation. You bring proposals to the funder, and if the proposals are promising enough, they're funded.

William Watson: And the funder is bin Laden, you think?

Janice Gross Stein: Yes. And the people around him, though that's not always totally clear because there are others who have access to resources. We have to understand that this is not a very expensive operation. The intelligence estimates are that it cost $US 500,000. I think that's far too low. But even if it's one or two million dollars, it's very inexpensive. You don't need a great deal of money. You need the capacity to move the money.

This is a global network, which operates as a horizontal organizational structure, with some coordinating mechanisms at the centre. We really don't know how tight or how loose the coordinating mechanisms are. Given that, it still needs a base. And it still needs the shelter of a state. The computer network is not a bad model here, too. The organization needs a host, and the Taliban have provided that host. Osama bin Laden went from Saudi Arabia to Sudan and extended his activities throughout the region in Sudan. He was then expelled and he went to Afghanistan. There has to be a headquarters somewhere on the ground, no matter how decentralized the network is.

William Watson: It's a sort of a virtual operation, though, and in virtual operations, the headquarters is the boss's current hotel room.

Janice Gross Stein: That's right, but it depends on what the network is producing. If you're recruiting people, if you're training people, you need some facilities to recruit and train. And that's what exists in Southern Afghanistan.

William Watson: The other part of the computer metaphor would be the Internet, which was designed to be survivable, so that if you hit part of it, it just finds new ways of operating.

Janice Gross Stein: I think that's exactly the right analogy here. Whatever the future of Osama bin Laden is over the next six months, capturing him will not solve the problem. Failure to capture him will exacerbate the problem very badly because the stakes have been raised.

William Watson: Was it wise to raise the stakes?

Janice Gross Stein: No.

William Watson: Or did he raise the stakes because of the nature of the Sept. 11th attack?

Janice Gross Stein: He raised the stakes himself. But I think it was unwise to personalize this to the degree that it has been personalized. There is always a tendency at a time of anxiety and uncertainty and fear, to personalize. And that's unfortunate in the circumstances. Clearly he plays a very important role but there are other members of that network who have been identified and who are critical to it. This is largely an Egyptian and Saudi network. And were Osama bin Laden to be removed, the network would continue. They would have to find a new base of operations. These are Saudi and Egyptian exiles, who have fled Egypt or Saudi Arabia, and who went first to Sudan, and now to Afghanistan, to find headquarters for a network like this. They can't operate without a headquarters; they have to be somewhere. So even though we're dealing with something that I think is fundamentally new, we're also dealing with something old. What has changed is that the cost to a state of hosting this network has gone way up.

William Watson: Is your view that Afghanistan at the moment is the only host?

Janice Gross Stein: Yes.

William Watson: Although presumably they'll be looking around for a new host.

Janice Gross Stein: Yes they will. And where do you look? You look in a fractured state, where central authority is extremely weak—which is exactly what Afghanistan was four or five years ago. Sudan is really not a candidate now at all, less a candidate now that it was even a decade ago. Somalia is a possibility but it's going to be very difficult.

William Watson: What's the appropriate strategy for attacking this kind of an international terrorist network?

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Janice Gross Stein: I believe that the military component of this is very small. Unlike some people, I do believe there is a military component, because it is essential that it be made prohibitively expensive to host this kind of network. And that's why the emphasis on bin Laden himself is a mistake.

William Watson: It's a mistake in terms of Western public opinion?

Janice Gross Stein: It's a mistake in terms of Western public opinion because the feeling will be, if he's found and killed, that the problem is over. But it won't be. It's a mistake in terms of public opinion in the Middle East, because among those who are sympathetic not to his tactics but to his message—which is a different issue—he's been elevated to the status of the one man who stands and defies the evil West. That's not helpful.

William Watson: How far would you take the military action?

Janice Gross Stein: Not far. Afghanistan is already paying the price. The Taliban are already paying that price. There are only two possible futures for the Taliban right now. One future is that the tensions inside the Taliban come to the surface and boil over and there is a split within the Taliban. Already there are very real tensions between the Kabul branch and the Kandahar branch, the northern branch and the southern branch. It would then be possible, if there were such a split, to form a new government, one that had a significant Pashtun component to it. There is no



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government of Afghanistan without a significant Pasthtun component.

That's one possibility. And that's the one, I think, that the United States is counting on. A second possibility is that the Taliban simply retreat to the mountains and Afghanistan descends into civil war, as it did before the Taliban came to power, from 1993 until 1996.

Either of these two scenarios is a defeat for the Taliban. And they're not in a position, under either of those two scenarios, to provide the kind of shield for al-Qaeda that they did.

William Watson: And there's a demonstration to other governments that this could happen to you, too.

Janice Gross Stein: That's correct. That is a legitimate objective of this kind of military action. And that's been achieved, at least in the first round.

William Watson: Already, you think?

Janice Gross Stein: Virtually, yes.

William Watson: People certainly are moving around Afghanistan and out of it at high speed.

Janice Gross Stein: That's the tragedy. There are different assessments of the amount of domestic support that the Taliban enjoys. And frankly, how do we know? We don't have any good evidence. But certainly the harshness of its rule over the last two years has led to some disaffection on the part of Pashtun-speaking, Islamic Afghanis. It's very important that we not romanticize the Taliban. It is a harsh, abusive regime that has done absolutely dreadful things to its own population.

William Watson: Who is your favorite candidate for the next government of Afghanistan? And what's the West's role in propping up that? Is it a case of anybody but the Taliban?

Janice Gross Stein: That is not my view. As I said, there are different elements within the Taliban. The tensions within the Taliban are along geographic but also family and clan lines. The best outcome would be a split within the Taliban and a willingness to collaborate with parts of the Northern Alliance, who are Tajik and Uzbek. But again, let's remember the record of the Northern Alliance. It was catastrophic. It was the Northern Alliance warlords that brought Afghanistan to its knees in a civil war for six years. The Taliban came to power as a result of the fierce in-fighting among elements of what is today the Northern Alliance. They have not demonstrated a capacity to govern together in a coalition.

William Watson: There seems to be a serious lack of Jeffersonian Democrats in Afghanistan.

Janice Gross Stein: There certainly is. Afghanistan historically has worked best as a loose confederal system.

William Watson: It's a strange war where you drop bombs and on the first day you also drop aid.

Janice Gross Stein: What is different about this war is that the military strategy is led by a salvo of missiles to knock out the critical infrastructure, followed at the same time by the beginnings of what will be a food drop. Hopefully, it will be followed by a serious humanitarian and development programme that helps to rebuild Afghanistan's infrastructure and governance system.

William Watson: The Marshall plan came *after* the war.

Janice Gross Stein: That's correct. I cannot remember a war in history that started this way.

William Watson: What has been your impression of Canada's reaction to this? Both the government and the people? And what do you think our role should be?

Janice Gross Stein: I think the public reacted in a very nuanced way. There was enormous sympathy for New Yorkers, for the United States—very, very strong identification with the tragedy that has befallen them. A lot of the traditional irritants in the Canadian-American relationship have been put aside and we feel less of a sense of difference with the United States than we have for a long, long time. This may be an enduring change that is quite deep at a public level.

At the same time, there is a sense of caution that is manifested in two ways. First, there is a concern about the consequences for civil liberties in the country. It's quite interesting historically that the concern is larger now in Canada than it is in the United States, but in the United States, it may become apparent too. Traditionally, Americans have the most rights-based culture in the world, far more than Canadians traditionally have had. In comparison to the United States, we've always had a more communitarian culture. But the concern in Canada about the whole basket of civil liberties is larger right now than in the United States. And secondly, there is a sense that we want to help.

William Watson: Is there a wide range of choice about what Canada's contribution to this effort can be? We tend not have much to offer on the military side.

Janice Gross Stein: No, we don't. But let's look at this war in comparison with the one ten years ago. The United States is doing exactly the reverse of what it did in the Gulf War. In the Gulf War, it built a coalition in which it wanted the visible participation of as many states as possible in the military action. This time it's building a coalition, which it desperately needs, not for the military cooperation it can provide but for the intelligence sharing and results. And it wants as little military involvement by other states as possible.

William Watson: We're very well set to help, on that.

Janice Gross Stein: We're very well positioned. Some of the conversation in the country over the last four weeks has been agonizing about what we can do from the military point of view, when in fact the United States doesn't want U.S. to do much from the military point of view. That's not what it wants from Canada or from almost anybody else. It doesn't need military help of any kind. And it doesn't even need the political cover of military help. The United States does not want to be constrained in the way that it was during the Gulf War.

William Watson: In terms of tactics or strategy or what?

Janice Gross Stein: Everything. Tactics, targets, the end result. To the extent that you have a functioning coalition, you're constrained. The United States was constrained at the end of the Gulf War. In Kosovo, there were 15 partners and there was proactive review of the target list. That is not what the United States wants this time. So, in a paradoxical way, what the United States is asking of us is not military assistance, even though we will make a military contribution. The really hard discussions are going to come on intelligence sharing.

William Watson: Do we have a lot of intelligence that would be useful to them, independent of what they have?

Janice Gross Stein: We have information about people in Canada, though I think that that conversation has been slightly skewed. Certainly we have had a less than perfect record of following up individuals in this country suspected of involvement in terrorism. But our record is no worse than the United States' record. Let's look at the profiles of the participants in this particular operation. All of the hijackers crossed U.S. borders. None came directly from Canada. Some were living illegally on expired visas in the United States. In some cases, the intelligence agencies in the United States had these people on watch lists but had lost track of them.

If we compare the performance of the two countries, ours is not measurably worse than that of the United States. So in that sense, I think the conversation has been unfair. One can understand some of the senators and congressmen who have been talking about the Canadian border. And I don't want to deny that we have difficulties. But the reporting has been badly skewed.

William Watson: What is your view of how the civil liberties question will evolve in Canada as this crisis plays itself out?

Janice Gross Stein: There are some real challenges here. I don't think that putting this question in the perspective of traditional Canadian-American relations is the most helpful way to look at it. Much of what the United States is going to ask would be on the Canadian agenda anyway.

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I think what we've been talking about for the last four weeks has been misguided. We've been talking about harmonization of refugee policy and immigration policy and I don't think that those are the issues at all. If we think of policy as the numbers of people we take into this country and the kinds of people we take into this country (by which I mean from what part of the world they come), I don't think that these are the issues. Policy refers to the broad outlines of what proportion of our population every year we want to take as refugees, and the number of immigrants we want to attract to Canada, and what kinds of immigrants we want to attract. These policy questions should not be the issues.

The issues are going to be: how tightly interlinked will our own security procedures be and how tightly will they be linked with those of the United States? Inside Canada, we have not done an adequate job—nor have the Americans—of interlinking the information systems that we have. The information that's in CSIS doesn't get moved to the RCMP, or the Department of Immigration, or Customs people, on the front lines. And the same is true in the U.S. CIA computers don't talk to FBI computers, don't talk to the INS computers, and so on. So, in each country there will be a tighter integration of information systems.



When there is no opportunity to express dissent, then the alternative becomes either silence or alignment with the most militant elements who are willing to use the most militant tactics. The Middle East, most of it, has in the last 20 years fallen way behind other parts of the world in terms of its capacity to tolerate legitimate dissent within the political system.

The bigger challenge becomes: do you integrate the two countries' information systems? And what does that mean? If we build a completely integrated information network to construct a North American security perimeter, then a red flag in any part of it is a red flag for all. If this is what we decide we need to do, we will be ceding to the United States the capacity to identify an individual that is the object of suspicion. Not a group, but an individual.

William Watson: Can you not avoid a lot of problems by simply saying that we're not going to take people from certain parts of the world?

Janice Gross Stein: I think that would be the worst outcome, and a decision that Canadians would not make. If we did that, that would translate into "We're not going to take anybody from the Middle East." That's what it means. And why would we do that?

William Watson: Well, we might feel that if 100 per cent of the terrorists come from that region…

Janice Gross Stein: Well, 100 per cent of the terrorists are an infinitesimal percentage of the people who come to this country for good and legitimate reasons from that part of the world. And this is not the only global network of terrorists that's operating. There are others, from other regions.

William Watson: And in any case this network presumably would change its *modus operandi* anyway, if it could.

Janice Gross Stein: That's correct. The issues surrounding a security perimeter will translate into the most mind-numbing detail of regulation. Where do you build in the checks in the system? Who triggers the alarm? What happens when you trigger an alarm? How long do you keep somebody in detention without access to counsel? And without being charged? When the alarm is triggered, is there a joint review of the criteria which trigger an alarm?

William Watson: So there may not be a big change in civil liberties for the great mass of us, but some people might be in trouble. A small percentage.

Janice Gross Stein: That's not what I said. Again, it depends what the criteria are. Is the criterion somebody does business in the Middle East? Is the criterion somebody who is in regular contact with people in the Middle East? I myself am in regular contact with scholars of that region and have been for years. I wouldn't know anything about that part of the world if I weren't. So what are the criteria? And how are they interpreted? None of that is captured in this conversation about policy. The issues will be defined through regulation, interpretation, and judicial review.

William Watson: What's your view of the Canadian government's reaction to the crisis?

Janice Gross Stein: I think we heard different voices coming from the Canadian government. We heard one voice from the Prime Minister, and a somewhat different voice from the Foreign Minister. I think at times the Prime Minister has captured the mood of the country, which is: Canadians are cautious. On the other hand, I think at times the Foreign Minister captured the mood of the country. What he was able to articulate was this sense of identification that Canadians felt with ordinary Americans as a result of what happened.

William Watson: People talk about this as a twilight struggle. Do you think it's going to take a long time?

Janice Gross Stein: Yes, it's going to take a long, long time.

William Watson: Possibly forever?

Janice Gross Stein: If the question is: are we going to have networks of terror forever? Yes, of course. We haven't had global networks before, but we've had terrorism in one form or another for hundreds of years. This particular network, in its present form? Not forever, but for a long time.

There has also been a lot of discussion in public about why this part of the world, at this moment in its history, is producing this kind of action by a small minority. I think we have to look hard at what's happened in this part of the world. There is certainly dissatisfaction with U.S. policy, but there are many parts of the world that, for different reasons, are dissatisfied—sometimes bitterly—with U.S. policy and yet don't produce this kind of terrorism against civilians. What is happening inside these societies that is producing this kind of action? You don't have to look far. The Middle East, most of it, has in the last 20 years fallen way behind other parts of the world in terms of its capacity to tolerate legitimate dissent within the political system. And when there is no—and I mean no—opportunity to express dissent, then the alternative becomes either silence or alignment with the most militant elements who are willing to use the

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most militant tactics. That's what we're seeing.

I don't know how much attention people have paid to politics within Egypt and Saudi Arabia, but last summer, Egypt jailed Said Adin Ibrahim. He is one of Egypt's outstanding sociologists, and he was jailed because he was monitoring elections with funds from the European Union. There was outrage about his arrest and imprisonment among people who know and follow his work. It is almost impossible, in most societies in the Middle East today, to express responsible dissent from government. The exception, the government that has done the best, is the government of Jordan, where the Islamicists were allowed to run for parliamentary elections and to serve in Parliament. You don't notice many Jordanian passports involved in the attacks on Sept. 11th. That is not an accident.

William Watson: Do the victims of this repression believe the United States is the source of it?

Janice Gross Stein: I wouldn't use the term "victims of the repression." Those who were exiled from their own societies because there was no room in these societies to express dissent made a direct connection between their inability to defeat these governments and support provided by the United States. That is a very facile argument. The house of Saud has been in power in Saudi Arabia since 1922. Of course, it has been able to buy military equipment from the United States, but if it hadn't bought equipment from the United States, it would have bought from France, from Germany or from Britain. The issue is that there is almost no opportunity to express dissent. Look at Kuwait. The coalition went to war for Kuwait ten years ago. The promise was that there was going to be an opening-up of the political process. Ten years later, has that opening happened? It hasn't happened. In fact if anything, in many of the countries in the region, there has been a closing, not an opening of the political process.

William Watson: I suppose a reasonable guess is that after Sept. 11th and with the events that are now occurring, the chances of an opening-up are reduced.

Janice Gross Stein: They are much less. There is a vicious circle here. Egypt, historically, has been one of the most open societies in the Middle East. Everyone understands the rules of the political game in Egypt, but Egypt has had a tradition of in-house intellectual critics whom governments have not touched. Egypt itself has gone through 20 years of a bitter struggle against Islamic Jihad. It has coped with that struggle in two ways: by shutting down dissent, on the one hand, and by shifting publicly in the way that it presents its politics—by becoming more and more Islamicist. Ultimately, the support for terrorism will erode when societies and governments in the Middle East open up the political process so that Islamicist parties can participate in the political process.

William Watson: But for the foreseeable future they are likely to be shutting things down even tighter?

Janice Gross Stein: That's a real possibility. The al-Qaeda network is largely an Egyptian and Saudi network, made up of Egyptian and Saudi exiles. Those governments are just as hostile to and just as threatened by this network as is the United States.

William Watson: In Pakistan, there have already been moves to put people under house arrest.

Janice Gross Stein: Absolutely. The Taliban, we know, was helped to power by the Pakistani intelligence services. The creation of the Taliban is probably the greatest victory that the Pakistani military has had in 50 years. And the Taliban have been sympathetic to Pakistan. President Musharraf has now cast his lot with the coalition. He has burnt his bridges behind him, and he has no choice. If he feels that his regime is threatened, he will impose martial law and he will shut down the politics of Pakistan. And as long as the cycle continues to repeat itself, the bin Ladens will flourish.

Living with the fear of terrorism is going to become part of the fabric of our society, in the way that it's part of the fabric of many other societies. We have to deal with it in the most effective way we can, but in the most civilized way we can. It's part of the present and it's part of the future.

William Watson: It's not a very hopeful message.

Janice Gross Stein: No. It's a sobering message. I don't think we should be misled by what is just the opening round and by the use of military force, which is the smallest and easiest part of it. I think it's been made very, very clear that it is suicidal to host a network like this. And that was an important message to send. Now the challenge becomes: how do we use the coalition that President Bush has put together to build an intelligence sharing network that is qualitatively different from what we had before? How do we do that in ways that are consistent with the very openness of the societies that we have? And in the long run how do we help governments in the Middle East to open their political systems? That's a 25-year process, at the very least.

North Americans have been privileged. They've lived behind the oceans, secure, immune from much of what was going on—not just in the Middle East—but in France, in Britain, in Germany, in Italy. Living with the fear of terrorism is going to become part of the fabric of our society, in the way that it's part of the fabric of many other societies. We have to deal with it in the most effective way we can, but in the most civilized way we can. It's part of the present and it's part of the future.

William Watson: Thank you very much for doing this.