Globalization and World Peace

by
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Let me say that my appearance here today, brief as it is, is a result of a lunch I had with Fred last week, when he told me about this initiative. He allowed me to come along today because I wanted to say a few things.

The first thing I wanted to say was to congratulate, of course, Mr. Scott, on his idea, and to say you couldn't have chosen more wisely in your associates, as is evidenced not just by them, but by the presence of the people in this room who represent the very best in thinking in this field. So it's really great that you have taken this initiative. The Bank is no doubt going to be the butt of much of your criticism, but we are looking forward to your advice.

The second thing that I wanted to say was that in all seriousness I really do believe that there is no more important moment than now to deal with the issues that come to your attention and that so many of us in this room are addressing. I want to say that for many of us the issue of poverty and the issue of development has been central to our thinking. What seemed to me to have happened on September the 11th is that we had a highly visible incident which brought home yet again what most of us in this room have regarded as true, which is that the notion of two worlds, of the developed and developing world and the notion of the difference between them, as well as the policy that we have in developed countries towards countries in development -the policies that we rich have to those that are poor-, of reaching out from one side of the fence to the other, that that notion is no longer true visibly. For most of us it was not true beforehand, because for most of us, the globe is now unified. On September the 11th, if there ever was a wall, we saw it collapse in Wall Street and we saw it collapse at the Pentagon, when Afghanistan came to Wall Street and to the Pentagon.

So this issue of globalization is about the relationships around the world; what is the impact of poverty on each of us, what are the nature of the questions that we need to address if we're talking about peace? Surely for us at the Bank, and I'm sure for Nancy and others, it becomes the central issue for not just today but for the next 25 or 100 years.

Taking it just for the next 25 will add two billion more people on the planet, and they will go to the current developing world, and in the parlance of the day, we've got a billion two-hundred million in the developed countries, one-fifth of the world out of 6 billion, so the next two billion will go to the 4.8 billion in the developing world, so that 25 years from now they'll have 6.8 billion out of 8. Any sort of
distinction between either the economics or the health or the environment or the migration or the crime or the terror, or anything that we thought separated us, is gone.

For me, that is the central focus of my interest in this center because it seems to me that what you're talking about in the Center is not just economics, it's really peace. If you can, in your work, frame the issues in a way that can force everybody to think about global issues as local issues, to think about foreign issues as domestic issues, and to think about economics as a unity and social issues as a unity, and terror as a unity, and poverty as a unity, we can start recognizing that globalization is a new way of looking at our issues in a planetary sense. This to me is the transition that was made clear on September the 11th.

If you had a lot of work to do before September the 11th, it seems to me you have a lot more to do after September the 11th, and that the issues include not just economics, but cultural issues, social issues, religious issues, issues that bring together the hard sciences and the soft sciences, that make us seek to build a better understanding of our planet, not just as a philosopher, but as people who are concerned about peace and development for all of us. So I think there is a real need for this institute.

But let me say that I really do believe that this next period for all of us is going to be a particularly important one, and maybe this next decade is going to be determining in terms of issues of peace for our kids.

So I congratulate you again on what you're doing, and I congratulate Nancy on taking this on, the partnership with Fred and with so many other colleagues who are joining you. I'd like to assure you that as far as the Bank is concerned, we would like to give you any support we can, we would like to be there to be your partner and to be criticized by you, but most of all we'd like to join with you in what I think is an extremely important effort, which is an effort to understand the world that we're going into and to lay a basis for peace and prosperity and for people all over the world.

Thank you so much.