

## **Ignatieff has 'second thoughts' about Iraq**

By *ALLISON MARTELL*

"When you have second thoughts, a good place to have them is at home," said Michael Ignatieff last Friday at the Munk Centre for International Studies. His talk, entitled "Intervention after Iraq: Some Second Thoughts" was part of the Cambodian Genocide Group's "Responsibility to Protect" lecture series.

"Responsibility to Protect" is the title and guiding principle of the report filed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. Appropriately, Ignatieff was one of the commissioners who prepared the document. It asserts that governments have the responsibility to protect their citizens from harm, and that when they cannot or will not, the rest of the world must do so.

Ignatieff graduated from the University of Toronto and received his Ph.D. from Harvard University, where he is now the Carr Professor of Human Rights Practice and Director of the Carr Center of Human Rights Policy. He has taught at Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, the University of California, the University of London, and the London School of Economics. His books have won numerous awards, including the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction.

Initially, Michael Ignatieff was a supporter of the war on Iraq. Since the invasion however, like many others, he has had some second thoughts. Over the course of his talk, he attempted to explain them.

"We were looking at a gathering threat. Not imminent; gathering," he said of Iraq prior to the United States' most recent war. In examining his assumptions at that time, Ignatieff said he had trusted the American government to have good intelligence sources within Iraq.

"Don't trust big powers when they tell you 'we've got intelligence,'" he said. "They drove in the dark."

Ignatieff also criticized the antiwar movement, particularly the popular slogan, "no blood for oil."

"A great power that doesn't fight for its oil supplies will not be a great power very long," he said, also pointing out that if oil was its only concern, the United States would not need to go to war with Iraq to get it.

But ultimately, Ignatieff said he wasn't out to redirect blame.

"I can't finger them and not finger myself here," he said, and later, "I feel I can't just keep saying 'Well, they screwed it up; it's not my fault.'"

The event was organized by the Cambodian Genocide Group, in cooperation with the Munk Centre and the Asian Institute at U of T. The Cambodian Genocide Group is a student organization with dual purposes, as the organizers explained.

"We look backwards, we look at history, but we also are a proactive group. We look at genocide right now," explained Andrew Hasder, an organizer of the event.

On why they decided to run the speaker series, Kartick Kumar, another organizer, said, "We wanted to bring to the life of the university some interesting speakers on those topics that we

wanted to raise."

"He crystallizes everything and puts everything into perspective in a way that you didn't really think about before," Kumar said of Ignatieff's talk.

"He's begun to articulate such an incredibly deep and complex set of issues, and I think the structure he brings to that debate is really helpful," added Hasder.

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