

GAME CHANGER

The Impact of 9/11 on North American Security

Edited by Jonathan Paquin and Patrick James



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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Acknowledgments | ix |
| Introduction | 1 |
| The Changing Contours of North American Security | |
| <i>Jonathan Paquin and Patrick James</i> | |
| Part I: Theoretical Explanations of Post-9/11 Security Relations | |
| 1 Was 9/11 a Watershed? | 11 |
| <i>Charles F. Doran</i> | |
| 2 The Homeland Security Dilemma | 31 |
| Assessing the Implications for Canada-US Border Security Negotiations | |
| <i>Frank P. Harvey</i> | |
| 3 Toward Greater Opportunism | 49 |
| Balancing and Bandwagoning in Canada-US Relations | |
| <i>Justin Massie</i> | |

| | | |
|--|--|-----|
| 4 | Canada, the United States, and Continental Security after 9/11 An Assessment Based on Attribution Theory <i>Mark Paradis and Patrick James</i> | 65 |
| 5 | Canada-US Security Cooperation under the Security and Prosperity Partnership An Autopsy Report <i>Jonathan Paquin and Louis Bélanger</i> | 91 |
| Part II : Significant Developments in North American Security and Defence | | |
| 6 | The Disintegrative Effects of North America's Securitization on the Canada-Mexico Relationship <i>Stephen Clarkson</i> | 119 |
| 7 | Mexico's Ambiguous Foreign Policy toward North America <i>Athanasios Hristoulas</i> | 139 |
| 8 | From the Border Partnership Agreement to the Twenty-First-Century Border Enforcing Security on the US-Mexico Border <i>Isabelle Vagnoux</i> | 155 |
| 9 | National Interest or Self-Interest? Advocacy Think Tanks, 9/11, and the Future of North American Security <i>Donald E. Abelson</i> | 175 |
| 10 | A Common "Bilateral" Vision North American Defence Cooperation, 2001-12 <i>Philippe Lagassé</i> | 193 |
| 11 | Defence Policy and the Aerospace and Defence Industry in North America The Changing Contours of the Post-9/11 Era <i>Yan Cimon</i> | 213 |

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----|
| 12 | The Canada-US Alliance in the Post-9/11 Context Any Room for Mexico? <i>David G. Haglund</i> | 231 |
| | Conclusion Continental Security – What Now? <i>Jonathan Paquin and Patrick James</i> | 251 |
| | Bibliography | 261 |
| | Contributors | 287 |
| | Index | 289 |

Introduction

The Changing Contours of North American Security

JONATHAN PAQUIN AND PATRICK JAMES

The traumatic events of September 11, 2001, caused a security upheaval in North America. The process by which the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) partners had been coordinating their economic integration in the 1990s came to an abrupt halt as border security and sovereignty issues reappeared in the national political agendas. It is therefore fair to argue that 9/11 was a game changer – “a newly introduced element or factor that changes an existing situation or activity in a significant way.”¹

In response to the attacks, the US government rapidly implemented a series of security transformations that impacted its bureaucracy, defence apparatus, and border security system. Within a year, the Bush administration had created a massive Department of Homeland Security from several federal agencies, the Department of Defense had established a US Northern Command (NorthCom) to protect the homeland and provide military support to the US government, and new bilateral border security agreements were signed with Canada and Mexico. The main objectives of these agreements were to facilitate policy coordination at the Canada-US and Mexico-US borders and to keep North American borders closed to security threats while open to the legitimate movement of people and goods. These changes inevitably affected Washington’s relations with Ottawa and Mexico City and compelled the Canadian and Mexican

governments to adapt to new American security requirements in order to minimize the effects of 9/11 on transborder trade and commerce.

These security transformations led to intense cooperation as well as obvious political tensions among the three North American partners. The fact that Canada, the United States, and Mexico operate in an asymmetrical interdependent environment, and tend to arrive at different assessments of the issues at stake, explains the simultaneously sweet and sour aspects of their mutual relations. In this respect, one question at the centre of discussions throughout the 2000s was how to reconcile two North American requirements: the reality of economic interdependence and the timeless Westphalian notion of national security and territorial protection.

In that context, this volume provides a better understanding of the increasingly important domain of twenty-first-century hemispheric security integration. While also focusing on important points of continuity in North American relations, it investigates how and why security transformations have occurred since 9/11. Hence, its main objective is not to provide a normative assessment of continental integration or to generate a macro-historical analysis of its political evolution. Rather, the essays in this collection identify the grounds for further cooperation as well as the sensitive issues that should be handled with care to improve the future of North American security relations.

Collectively speaking, the contributors to this volume write with authority on the subject at hand. Most of them are Canadian scholars pursuing their career in North American universities across the continent, and, given this reality, the book reflects, to a certain extent, a Canadian perspective on hemispheric security relations and offers a unique take on the complex issues discussed. More specifically, the chapters in this volume constitute an important addition to the growing literature on North American politics, making a theoretical and empirical contribution to the study of core security issues that have challenged North American governments since 9/11. Among the overarching themes are variations in the perception of threat among Canada, the United States, and Mexico, and consequently differences in the interests and priorities of their respective governments. Most of the specific issues addressed here are derived from these general themes. For instance, the failure to establish a trilateral approach to dealing with security integration in the aftermath of 9/11, or the bargaining situation in which Canada's and Mexico's economic benefits depended on the success of security negotiations with the United States, directly related to these states' different security perceptions and priorities.

Thus, *Game Changer* builds upon recent scholarly contributions that address a variety of issues on North American relations, including *North America in Question*, edited by Jeffrey Ayres and Laura Macdonald; “Sharing the Burden of the Border,” by Stéfanie von Hlatky and Jessica Trisko; *Does North America Exist?* by Stephen Clarkson; and *Politics in North America*, edited by Yasmeeen Abu-Laban, Radha Jhappan, and François Rocher² – titles that foreshadow some of the priorities adopted by this book.

Each of the experts contributing to *Game Changer*, having knowledge of a wide range of substantive issues in the domain of security, was asked to address a number of questions, including the following:

- Given the nature of the regional context, how do international relations theories help to explain the behaviour of the North American states toward one another in the post-9/11 era?
- How can the tension between state autonomy and the search for greater regional cooperation be reconciled for the sake of better security relations?
- To what degree is the perception of threat uniform versus unique to each respective state and society?
- Did the intense nature of 9/11 induce linkage between issues among the three North American states?
- To what extent did 9/11 set the stage for trilateralism, perhaps in the form of a security perimeter?
- What combinations of factors – monadic, dyadic, or triadic – have played the most significant role in shaping policy after 9/11?

Hence, the chapters provide answers to various subsets of these queries. The book is organized into two parts, followed by a conclusion that integrates the insights from the overall study into comprehensive answers.

Part I focuses on a range of theoretical explanations of state behaviour in the post-9/11 continental environment. This is significant because the literature in international relations has largely ignored this important topic. Hence, the chapters rely on international relations theories to debate North American security relations and shed light on the behaviour of the United States, Canada, and, to a certain extent, Mexico in the current regional context. The authors all agree that 9/11 caused political discontinuity in the integration process that had been initiated by NAFTA.

Charles Doran opens the discussion with a multilevel analysis of the different impacts of 9/11 on North America. He sees 9/11 as having ushered in a form of countervailing power through a dramatically increased sense of vulnerability at home for the United States. Whereas the trend on the continent had been toward continental

integration, the new security imperatives in Washington reversed that momentum. It is in this way that Doran sees 9/11 as a game changer. In his view, the enhancement of security measures has dampened the idea of a North American community. At the same time, he wonders whether the tensions over security and border issues experienced in the last decade may simply have provoked a return to normality – that is, to the pre-NAFTA context, when differences and diverging political interests sometimes caused disagreements between North American neighbours. Whether or not this is the case, Doran characterizes 9/11 as a highly prominent event, with an important short-term impact on security and economic cooperation that overshadowed the ongoing effects of more important structural trends. He regards the shift in power away from North America and toward Asia – less visible than the loss of life and destruction of property on 9/11 – as likely to impact much more significantly on foreign policy strategies over the long term. Thus, more thought needs to be given to how North America as a whole ought to react to this structural change in capabilities, as opposed to continuing to focus on more superficial policy aspects related to terrorism.

Chapter 2, by Frank Harvey, offers a dramatic answer to the question of how much things have changed by focusing on the causes of public fears about terrorism in the United States. He identifies a seemingly insatiable need for security among the American public, a need not based on any kind of rational calculation of probability regarding the danger from terrorism. Instead, the US reaction is fundamentally emotive and tends to exaggerate the importance of terrorism because it is a menace that seems beyond control. It is crucial for the leaders of Canada and Mexico to grasp this belief among many Americans in order to identify policies that may help to reduce US pressure to close off the borders. Harvey offers an approach to policy that might be implemented by the different governments to minimize damage to trade relations in particular. Given the likelihood that the American public will continue to demand very strict border security even under conditions of objectively minimal dangers from terrorism, it would be prudent for Canadians and Mexicans to accept this psychological reality and pursue adaptive strategies and tactics.

In Chapter 3, Justin Massie looks closely at Canadian policy toward the United States. Based on terminology from the realist school of international relations, he identifies two phases in Canadian policy after 9/11. In the years immediately following 9/11, the Canadian government adopted a hybrid position. Canadian strategy and tactics featured some degree of balancing against US interests while simultaneously bandwagoning with its much more power-

ful neighbour when convenient. These policies, in the language of realism, can be referred to as “soft” balancing and bandwagoning; the decisions to adopt one or the other of these low-intensity options were quite pragmatic and circumstantial. By contrast, in more recent years, the government of Stephen Harper has revealed what Massie sees as a more programmatic commitment to hard bandwagoning. Canada, in seeking favour with the United States, has shown convergence with the latter’s security policy with regard to both means and ends. Pro-US positions, along with a shift toward military procurement and deployment, represent the key features of Ottawa’s current approach to Washington in the domain of security policy.

In Chapter 4, Mark Paradis and Patrick James apply a political psychology framework to decision making to obtain insights about Canadian foreign policy after 9/11. Canada has supported the United States on some occasions but not others. Attribution theory can help solve the puzzle of varying Canadian reactions to US requests for security cooperation. This theory focuses on whether actions can be traced to the disposition or situation of a given actor. Thus, Canada, for example, might be more sympathetic to the use of force by the United States if Washington appeared to have no choice (situation) as opposed to having rejected viable alternatives (disposition). Attribution theory is well confirmed by evidence from the memoirs of Canadian prime ministers. As predicted by the theory, Canada supported the US-led overthrow of the Taliban (a situation in which the United States appeared to have no choice but to act as it did) but reacted in the opposite way when Washington initiated a war against Iraq on the basis of what appeared to be rather flimsy evidence.

In the last chapter of Part 1, Jonathan Paquin and Louis Bélanger examine the creation and downfall of one of the key North American security coordination initiatives of the last decade, the North American Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP). The SPP brought together the three North American states in a flexible intergovernmental forum with the goal of addressing trade and security needs in a coherent process of common regulatory norms. The partnership did not last, however, and was abandoned after four years of irregular negotiations. Paquin and Bélanger test several theoretical explanations for its demise. The end of the SPP ultimately serves as a reminder of the limits of trilateral cooperation among such a diverse collection of states.

Part 2 offers a series of analyses of the principal developments in continental security and defence since 2001. President George W. Bush’s post-9/11 statement that “security trumps trade” heralded Washington’s policy shift from a free trade to a national security emphasis, and foreshadowed a new set of priorities for Washington’s

negotiations with its neighbours. Part 2 examines how this security priority has been embodied in North American relations, and the impacts of this transformation on the North American dynamic. This policy shift has also had an impact on the continental defence integration process and leads us to wonder whether 9/11 has resulted in a deeper level of defence integration.

In Chapter 6, Stephen Clarkson assesses the impact of US policies since 9/11 upon relations between Mexico and Canada. In his judgment, Washington's intense pursuit of security has had a deleterious effect on the two countries' relationship. On the surface, Canada and Mexico should have joined forces in trying to cope with the United States' heightened demands regarding border security. Instead of demonstrating enhanced cooperation, however, Canada and Mexico have drifted apart as a by-product of Washington's continued pressure on both countries to enhance security across the board. In fact, Clarkson's review of Canada-Mexico relations shows a movement toward competition as each state attempts to prove its worth to the United States in particular.

Chapter 7, by Athanasios Hristoulas, focuses on the foreign policy challenges experienced by Mexico. Given a series of problems, some of which predate 9/11, the Mexican government is moving toward a more pragmatic and less nationalistic stance toward North America. This is true especially of Mexico City's relationship with Washington. Interesting to ponder, as the Mexican government tries to work out compromises with the United States over border security in particular, is the role of the domestic setting as a constraint on action. Concerns about sovereignty and excessive linkage to the United States pervade the Mexican state and society, and act as an impediment to interstate coordination of policy.

In Chapter 8, Isabelle Vagnoux concentrates on US relations with Mexico. Of paramount importance to this relationship after 9/11 was Washington's movement toward a more encompassing sense of security, with concomitant challenges to Mexico City regarding its northwest border. A much greater fear of terrorism in the country put massive pressure on US leaders to act on border security after 9/11. This has increased tension with Mexico, whose border with the United States is one of the most heavily transited in the world. The US decision to build a border fence as well as the greatly increased deployment of security personnel reflect the fact that issues such as drug and human trafficking have merged with the terrorist threat to create a "thickening" of the border. All of this points toward deteriorating relations between the United States and Mexico, which takes offence at the imposition of measures that appear to link it, in the US mind, with dangerous intrusions.

In Chapter 9, Donald Abelson focuses on the world of ideas, most notably the role played by think tanks. He finds that, in the wake of September 11, these research institutes followed government priorities in producing their reports. The agenda of the White House is a good predictor for what will be conveyed by think tanks in terms of both content and recommendations. Abelson notes that, among neglected items, the economic effects of border restrictions are of particular importance. Little is understood about this topic because the various think tanks have generally embraced rather than criticized the security-oriented narratives coming out of Ottawa and Washington. Abelson concludes that efforts on the part of think tanks to consider policy options above and beyond the standard government positions would be most welcome at this point.

Philippe Lagassé explains in Chapter 10 that whereas Ottawa and Washington cooperated extensively on border security and counterterrorism during the decade following 9/11, they failed to achieve full cooperation in the area of bilateral defence, although defence cooperation did intensify after 2001. According to Lagassé, this was partly due to the fact that, for reasons related to domestic politics and managerial concerns, the Canadian government was not interested in further integrating Canada's defence with the United States. Canada's main interest throughout the decade lay with keeping trade flowing across the border; in this context, a deeper bilateral defence architecture was unattractive to Ottawa. Moreover, Canada's refusal to join the coalition against Iraq in 2003 and to integrate the ballistic missile defence system rendered political discussions on continental defence more difficult. In sum, during the first decade of the twenty-first century, Canada and the United States were unable to create a truly binational approach to North American defence.

The impact of 9/11 on the military-industrial complex is assessed by Yan Cimon in Chapter 11. He focuses on the Canadian and American aerospace and defence industries to infer the degree to which expansion occurred in response to the greater sense of threat from terrorism. In terms of employment, the data are quite revealing, with the number of people working in the military-industrial sector increasing consistently over the last decade, which witnessed a transition into a period of consolidation and adaptability. In other words, the uncertain environment resulting from 9/11 produced both quantitative and qualitative changes in the military-industrial sector for Canada and the United States.

David Haglund concludes Part 2 by asking whether there is room for Mexico in Canada-US defence cooperation. He answers this question in the affirmative, proposing a rather novel idea. According to Haglund, the three North American states could reduce their "irritants" and increase cooperation on the continent by institutionalizing their security and defence partnership through the transatlantic

alliance, that is, by integrating Mexico into NATO. Haglund demonstrates that objections based on intuition regarding Mexican eligibility are off base. Mexico, it turns out, would fit into NATO better than some states that have achieved membership with little or no controversy. This original and unconventional idea would, according to Haglund, boost military cooperation between the United States and Mexico and could have a positive effect on democratic and security reforms in Mexico, although NATO's security sector reform capabilities would not eliminate the problem of corruption in Mexico.

This volume concludes with an assessment by Jonathan Paquin and Patrick James of the contribution made by these reflections on North American security after 9/11. The questions posed at the outset of this introductory chapter will be answered at least tentatively. It is our hope that this book will stimulate further efforts to appraise the meaning of 9/11 and apply its lessons to a more effective pursuit of North American security in the future.

NOTES

- 1 Merriam-Webster, [http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/game changer](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/game%20changer).
- 2 Jeffrey Ayres and Laura Macdonald, eds., *North America in Question: Regional Integration in an Era of Political Economic Turbulence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); Stéfanie von Hlatky and Jessica Trisko, "Sharing the Burden of the Border: Layered Security Cooperation and the Canada-US Frontier," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 45, 1 (2012): 63-88; Stephen Clarkson, *Does North America Exist? Governing the Continent after NAFTA and 9/11* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Radha Jhappan, and François Rocher, eds., *Politics in North America: Redefining Continental Relations* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

PART I

THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF
POST-9/11 SECURITY RELATIONS

1

Was 9/11 a Watershed?

CHARLES F. DORAN

Without question, the events of September 11, 2001, inadvertently and without forewarning introduced a new tension in relations among the United States, Canada, and Mexico.¹ Terrorism and the effort to quench it became a preoccupation for the United States, and therefore for the other two North American polities as well, to varying degrees.² Security concerns re-established the border between the United States and its neighbours, reversing the trend toward greater openness since the signing of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Although the argument was made that border security and trade openness were compatible, border security appeared to have a higher priority than trade and investment, at least for the United States.³

According to proponents of enhanced border protection, border security and trade are compatible because new techniques of interdiction, monitoring, and surveillance using new technologies and procedures interfere less with the flow of commerce and trade. The notion of a “smart border” becomes coterminous with border security. Yet firms, especially small firms without sophisticated ways of managing risk, especially on the Canadian side of the border, continue to complain about delays and the cost of border security and regulation. Despite good faith on both sides of the northern and southern borders to make them easier to cross legally, the fear of terrorism at the Canada-US border, along with the problem of drugs and illegal immigration at the Mexico-US border, seem to erect all

kinds of new barriers to the free flow of goods and services between these countries.

The real problem with the impact of border security on the overall relations among these countries was that secondary economic and political effects of surveillance began to impinge on the respective relationships.⁴ The borders began to diverge as to purpose and problem despite an American attempt to treat the two borders in the same way. The US border with Mexico became increasingly dominated by the flow of drugs and of illegal workers from one side and the illegal flow of guns from the other side. Its border with Canada, on the other hand, became part of an effort to create a foolproof barrier to hypothetical terrorists entering from the north. This divergence in terms of problem and objective began to wear at the edges of NAFTA, which was designed for coequality in terms of country participation.⁵ Security matters tore at the very heart of the notion that North America could be a single community.

The United States suspected that it defended "its" borders more rigorously than either Mexico or Canada. Mexico and Canada feared that border security disadvantaged them more seriously than it did the United States.⁶ For example, the decision by foreign as well as Canadian firms to locate in a US market that was ten times larger rather than in the smaller Canadian market appeared, because of increased border risk, to disadvantage Canada. Why, asked Americans, did the opening morning passenger line at the Calgary Airport stretch so far that it extended through the front door of the airport? Was there a problem of resource application here in terms of the number of gates available and the number of immigration and customs officials on duty? Why, asked Canadians, did it take just one hour for Canadian border officials to process passengers on Amtrak at the Niagara border crossing, but two hours for American border officials to process passengers going in the opposite direction? Were asymmetries creeping into the enforcement of procedures that no one desired but that everyone had to contend with, though not always proportionately?

But the real question regarding the impact of 9/11 on relations among the three North American countries is whether security concerns will create an irreversibly thickened border and result in a loss of commitment to the future enhancement of regional trade, financial, and commercial relations that have benefited each country so much.⁷ In an age of globalization, this question is hard to answer not only, for example, because of the attractiveness of China as a platform for manufacture but also because of the difficulty of assessing all of the costs and risks necessary to decide whether even without the security issue North America remains competitive globally for many goods and services that previously originated

from one of its three countries. Security is essential, but is the effort to enhance security adversely influencing North American capacity to compete in world markets? If the answer is yes, then 9/11 would truly be a watershed in North American international political economy, unless the lack of competitiveness in certain industries had long predated 2002.

What is the origin of the lack of North American competitiveness in certain industries, especially in manufacturing, when did this lack of competitiveness begin, and how much additional burden on competitiveness does a “thickened” border impose? These are central questions for additional empirical research. The events of 9/11 provide a kind of natural experiment to reinforce the test. Is added security a meaningful source of the problem of North American competitiveness, or much of an additional burden at all?

From the opposite side of the discussion, regarding the efficacy of walls, higher walls, or thicker walls on both the Mexican and Canadian borders, we are reminded of the famous poem by Robert Frost about the annual spring mending of a stone wall between him and his neighbour. The neighbour confidently quotes the expression passed down to him by his father: “Good fences make good neighbors.” Frost is not so sure. At the very least, he reminds the reader, “*Why* do they make good neighbors?”

Before I built a wall I'd asked to know,
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offence.

Frost wants to be certain that the purpose (and the actual unilateral capacity to achieve this purpose) justifies the means. And so should we. A stone wall to keep out cows is one thing; one to keep out squirrels is quite another.

Foreign Policy Change and Continuity

Underlying the question of whether 9/11 was actually a watershed for foreign policy in North America is the larger issue of whether foreign policy change or continuity is more pronounced among the United States, Canada, and Mexico.⁸ Perhaps, for example, the real discontinuity lay in the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which was perhaps unequalled by any other treaty or mode of association in the linkage it brought about among the three countries. Indeed, perhaps the NAFTA signing was even more momentous in that it was the first time a developing country had entered into a multilateral trade agreement on equal terms with two advanced industrial countries. So the novelty may not have been the impact

of 9/11 leading to greater dissociation among governments in North America – perhaps 9/11 merely precipitated a return to the normality of comparative *dissociation* among North American governments.⁹ Perhaps the true novelty was the prior break with the long-standing pattern of independence among North American governments in the final decade of the twentieth century.

To try to answer these questions more definitively, we must consider developments affecting the United States, Canada, and Mexico at three different levels of foreign policy conceptualization. First, we will examine world politics to determine whether international political developments at the global level signalled any kind of profound structural change circa 2002. North American relations do not operate in a global vacuum. What is happening on the world stage is crucial to the understanding of politics within North America. Too often in the discussion of North American relations the global perspective is brought in only tangentially and implicitly.

Second, we will consider foreign policy relations among the United States, Canada, and Mexico per se. To do this, we will look at three dimensions of analysis: (1) the trade-commercial dimension, (2) the political strategic and security dimension, and (3) the psycho-cultural dimension.¹⁰ In examining change in each of these dimensions simultaneously, we will seek to discover breaks with the past that are definitive for the entire set of relations among these countries. Moreover, individual countries will weigh these dimensions differently, providing an even richer canvas of comparison and contrast.

Third, we will delve into the domestic politics of each country to determine the extent to which party politics, institutional change, electoral factors, and regional difference affect the conduct of foreign policy. It is at this level that we will explore how Quebec has shaped the foreign policy of Canada in important ways, and how federal/state and federal/provincial relations have been factors in the manner in which the three governments have articulated their respective foreign policies toward each other.¹¹ For North America, domestic politics may be a more important precursor of policy initiative externally than the impact of global politics on the region or the interaction among the three governments within North America as a whole.¹²

In any case, to answer the question of whether 9/11 signified a true break with past policies, all three levels of analysis must carefully be examined. We do not expect to find comparability at each level, but by assessing change at each level of analysis, we will be in a better position to make judgments about whether continuity or change tends to predom-

inate in the overall foreign relations among the governments of North America.

How World Politics Affects North America

As explained in terms of power cycle theory, after rising on its power cycle for over a century and three-quarters, the United States “peaked” in relative terms somewhere around 1970.¹³ But because its level of relative power was so great and its decline so gradual, the peaking was experienced more like a plateau, and the downward trajectory of the United States was scarcely noticeable until a decade into the twenty-first century. The information revolution, which occurred in the United States first, combined with both the Reagan military buildup financed on borrowed money and the remaking of the American corporation, concealed from view American decline in its proper proportion. Some writers exaggerated this decline by not looking carefully at or misreading the numbers. Other writers and polemicists claimed for the United States “hegemony” in the interval of unipolarity, without defining the notion of hegemony precisely or recognizing the constraints on American power, great though it was.¹⁴ For the more prudent analyst, however, the United States, although its trajectory in relative power terms was downward, remained the pre-eminent military and economic power in the international system able to carry out a principal leadership role.¹⁵ Nevertheless, together with reinvigorated postwar Europe, Japan had been rising rapidly since the middle of the twentieth century, taking away a share of power from the United States so that when the latter peaked, it was incapable of sustaining such a role.

In the 1980s, some writers were claiming that Japan would be the new Number One, despite signs that the Japanese economy was beginning to sputter and Japanese military capability was minuscule compared with Washington’s. Only the Soviet Union could rival the United States militarily, in terms of its nuclear deterrent and its second-strike nuclear capability. Yet it was also very easy to exaggerate the military prowess of the United States in terms of actual capacity to control outcomes politically. Careful thinkers did not exaggerate either the rate of American decline or the level of American ascendancy, while noting that only one country within the international system – the United States – possessed a global reach.

Canada and Mexico were affected by the American provision of security in North America as well as by its involvement in wars abroad. Canada chose to stay out of the Iraq fray but to participate with NATO in the Afghanistan operation. Both of these choices, resulting from global international political threats, affected relations

between the United States and Canada profoundly. Only those observing the relations between Washington and Ottawa from afar would have mistaken the impact of these events on the capacity of each government to make policy, not just in a multilateral context but also in terms of bilateral cooperation.

During the Cold War, Canada and the United States were driven closer together for three reasons. First, particularly in the Stalinist period, the fragile security of Greece and the political vise around Eastern Europe put the democracies at risk in security terms. Second, polarization caused the two countries to coordinate their security policies closely in both a multilateral and a bilateral sense.¹⁶ Third, the multilateral freedom that Canada found within NATO gave it the confidence to act independently when it chose to do so, such as during the Vietnam War. Paradoxically, this sense of confidence also enabled Canada to cooperate with the United States in a host of other international situations, such as the Suez Crisis (1956) and the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (1988).

Whether this cooperation between the two nations in security terms was an example of bandwagoning or of balancing is a mystery perhaps better left unsolved.¹⁷ From the US perspective, Canada joined the United States in an effort to offset Soviet power in both its rising and its declining phases. This joint policy coordination required a closer monitoring of Soviet air power in the nuclear age within the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) than the United States undertook with virtually any other government, with the possible exception of the United Kingdom.¹⁸ On the other hand, from the perspective of Canada, the mutual interaction between the two nations, especially in its trade and economic dimension, looked very much like bandwagoning.¹⁹ Canada felt that it could not and did not balance the Soviet Union in a meaningful sense. But the economic benefits that it obtained from the United States during the Cold War, such as those stemming from the Auto Pact (1965), corresponded to the expected gains on a visible scale from bandwagoning. In Chapter 3, Justin Massie looks in detail at the role of bandwagoning and balancing in shaping Canadian foreign policy toward the United States.

The difference of opinion regarding whether bandwagoning or balancing was the valid perspective reveals the importance of the psycho-cultural dimension of relations between Canada and the United States. It was not quite a case of “don’t ask, don’t tell” at the international level, but the United States never sought to discover the true motivation for Canada’s collaboration with it, and Canada never volunteered any answers. That such a complexity of understanding could exist for so many years on the part of two governments that had as

much at stake as Canada and the United States is a tribute to the centrality of the psycho-cultural dimension for the relationship of trust that prevailed. The United States learned not to press too hard. Canada learned where the limits of disagreement lay.²⁰ The United States called this practice “taking the long view.” Canada was always sensitive to where vital interests began and ended.

In the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008-09 and its lingering employment, housing, and investment consequences in the United States, the rise of China came into focus more sharply than ever. Mexico felt the presence of China in its export markets for labour-intensive goods to the United States and elsewhere, in part because of the former’s success in raising its standard of living and therefore of its wage rates; however, Mexico did not enjoy an educational advantage vis-à-vis China sufficient to offset this growing wage disparity.

Much like Australia, Canada sought to increase its sales of commodities and raw materials to China without alienating the United States. It also welcomed Chinese investment in – where else? – its raw material industries, such as the oil sands development, and in pipeline construction, although there were limits to its acceptance of such investments (for example, regarding potash acquisition). Canada worried about alienating China, but it may as well not have worried. Chinese neomercantilists could take all such reactions in stride as long as Chinese companies could make inroads into resource acquisition elsewhere, under the very nose of the United States.

It is difficult to say whether the levelling out of the shares of total trade among Mexico, Canada, and the United States a decade after the signing of NAFTA contributed to the rise of trade between China and each of the North American trading partners, or whether spiralling trade between China and each of these states led to the plateauing of trade among the NAFTA partners.²¹ Perhaps these effects are two sides of the same coin. In any case, China became a growing factor in the trade and commercial policy of the three North American countries.

Correspondingly, barely a decade and a half after the NAFTA treaty was signed, the NAFTA idea appeared to move to the back burner for each of the partners. One of the motivations for NAFTA was to make North America competitive with Asia in trade matters.²² Some genuine progress was made in each of the three economies, but only further trade liberalization could bring about truly effective responses to the strains of globalization. Politically, such a move toward enhanced North American trade liberalization did not seem to be on the agenda of Ottawa, Washington, or Mexico City.

Many Western governments find it convenient to omit this fact, but China, although a capitalist state, is also governed by a communist party. One of the conceptual issues emerging in multilateral diplomacy with respect to China's ascendancy in the world system is whether the increase in trade and commercial interaction with China will impact the security dimension of the interaction. Would China insist on such a linkage? Would any of the North American trading partners try to "bribe" China into an enhanced trading and commercial interaction by offering to soft-pedal human rights criticisms or to downplay the importance of security ties with third parties? Or would China try to "extort" such behaviour? If China did so, how successful would the attempt be? This issue is etched even more starkly in Asia, as seen, for example, in South Korea's relations with China vis-à-vis South Korea's third-party interactions with Japan and the United States. Evidence regarding either of these potential tendencies for political bribery or extortion is still very conjectural.

It is indisputable, however, that China is having an impact on the relations between the three North American partners. For example, in the strategic-military dimension, the response of each country to events in the South China Sea – a long way from North American shores – shows marked differences. The jockeying and pushing and shoving that goes on between Chinese fishing trawlers and Vietnamese, Philippine, Taiwanese, Japanese, Indian, and South Korean vessels is virtually ignored by Mexico.²³ Canada has chosen to reserve judgment. The United States, on the other hand, has actively indicated its disapproval of the repeated Chinese actions to intimidate the maritime and naval fleets of its neighbours and to lay claim to virtually all of the South China Sea. The US navy has engaged in joint naval exercises with Japan and with South Korea to demonstrate solidarity with these governments. Although the three North American governments have responded differently to the Chinese provocations, China has not driven a wedge between them in terms of their attitude toward it. Nor has any of these governments dropped its support for a peaceful resolution of these disputes that recognizes the interests of all parties.

Viewed in terms of power cycle theory, however, the rise of China has important consequences for North America. According to power cycle theory applied to structural change in the modern state system since its origin, when structural change accelerates or decelerates, the increase in the probability of war becomes statistically significant.²⁴ Soon (the exact temporal point cannot be predicted with precision) China will pass through such a critical point in its power cycle where everything changes for state and system, and uncertainty will replace the normal degree of

certainty in statecraft. That is, China will reach the first inflection point in its power cycle, where the prolonged acceleration in the growth of Chinese relative power will abruptly give way to deceleration. Although China will continue to grow in relative power (albeit at an ever-decreasing rate), it is not psychologically prepared for this loss of momentum in the expansion of its foreign policy role. It is not prepared for the loss of face that will accompany this abrupt change in its prospects for a continued high rate of growth in visibility and material capacity for development. Under these circumstances of abrupt, massive structural change, the events in the South China Sea that presently amount to mere annoyance could suddenly escalate into war-prone behaviour.

Hence, North America, scarcely having recovered from the long bout with terrorism and instability in the Middle East, is now likely to have to contend with a much more earnest set of challenges associated with systems transformation. Systems transformation is structural change that is massive. Systems transformation has its origin in Asia but is not restricted to Asia. Systems transformation will involve all of the leading states in the system, hence it is likely to be upsetting to world politics. North America will not be able to escape the draft generated by these events.

Canada would like to operate in a trade and commercial sphere free of these larger international political complications, but this will not be possible. Just as power cycle theory looks at the world in terms of a “single dynamic” composed of state and system and of changing relative power and foreign policy role, so Canada must recognize how interrelated the economic-commercial and the strategic-military dimensions of statecraft really are.²⁵ Canada would like to concentrate on a world in which a loss of economic momentum in North America can easily be offset by new trade and commercial ties to China, but the problem with this idyllic conception of foreign policy is that it is likely to be confronted by all kinds of political and security complications that extend well beyond North America and yet entangle North America in their grasp.

Although more gradual, the ascent of China and eventually of India is likely to be more consequential for North America than the horrendous events of 9/11 and their policy aftermath. The ascent of China and India has the potential to de-industrialize large parts of North America for the very simple reason that the enormous disparity between productivity and cost of labour in these countries acts as a magnet for all goods and services production that is labour-intensive. Similarly, unlike the exchanges between the United States and Mexico and the United States and Canada regarding trade, in which the value added is very substantial for the smaller countries and the employment benefits very real, China and India,

because of the size of their markets, will have the ability to push North America into a situation where it is principally a food and commodity exporter to the two manufacturing giants.

The principle of comparative advantage guarantees that, in terms of cost, relative advantage, not absolute advantage, enables a trading nation with high-cost labour to find something to produce that is competitive in world markets. For the North American partners to escape the food/commodity production trap, they will need to specialize in high-tech output. This need to specialize will test the educational system in North America to the limit, in an age when literacy is a worldwide phenomenon and science and technology are broadly available to any firm willing to pay for them. Nevertheless, through a combination of entrepreneurship and technological sophistication, North America must find the niches and specializations that push the frontiers of manufacturing and services outward.

An open trading system in which comparative advantage is permitted to flourish is crucial. If neomercantilism is allowed to predominate, and if China is able to enforce a new worldwide trading and investment regime in which unilateral deals are cut for access to the Chinese market in exchange for the sale of a firm's latest technology, this "beggar thy neighbour" regime will undermine the principle of free trade. Firms in the import-competing industries struggling for a share of the Chinese market will be the first to feel this pressure for a new set of rules with a neomercantilist bent: witness the experience of the insurance industry in attempting to carve out a tiny share of the Chinese market. The liberal trading order is not doomed, but North America, Europe, and like-minded countries in Asia will need to defend it in the face of very determined neomercantilist opposition.²⁶ By the end of the twenty-first century, 9/11 may be all but forgotten but the century-long fight to preserve the rules of a liberal trade order will remain salient. To the extent that North America can help preserve this order and international trade thrives in open and uncontrolled fashion, the wealth of North America will continue to grow, undiminished. The United States, Mexico, and Canada must keep this vision of the engine of their prosperity ever before the eyes of their hard-pressed and sometimes fearful electorates.

Interactions among North American Countries

Toynbee once said that the key to American prosperity and power is that the United States was the first truly large, integrated market. Because the United States is so large, North America as a whole appears quite integrated, at least by world standards, and the European Union, despite its suc-

cess and its motivation to unite, is not as integrated in economic terms. When one considers political integration and its importance for economic integration, the answer is even clearer: North America has an edge. The paradox is that a North America that does not want an overriding set of supranational institutions is technically more integrated than a Europe with such institutions and that aspires to still greater political integration.

On the other hand, North America has made impressive progress toward greater economic integration across national borders through the great bilateral and multilateral treaties.²⁷ Beginning with the Canada-US Auto Pact in 1965, which was much like the European Coal and Steel Community of 1951 but with a somewhat different motivation (unlike Germany and France, Canada and the United States were not trying to prevent a resurgence of war between their countries), North American integration proceeded from an industrial agreement to a framework at the governmental level. The progression from the Auto Pact, to the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, to the North American Free Trade Agreement paralleled the roughly similar progression from the European Coal and Steel Community, to the European Economic Community, to the European Community, and finally to the European Union.

What the North American governments wanted, however, was the benefits of economic integration without any of the costs of further political integration. Indeed, electorates in Canada and the United States were persuaded to accept the huge step to the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement only with the implicit guarantee that no movement toward supranational political institutions would ever occur. Each country – Mexico, Canada, and the United States – has jealously guarded its notion of sovereignty, even as their governments have busily helped erode some of that sovereignty in economic terms. Rather than touting the benefits of economic integration, the governments had to emphasize the fact that they were not considering political integration in order to gain acceptability for the treaties.

In recent years, the study of international political economy has revealed that, notwithstanding trade liberalization, national economic sovereignty remains widespread. Based on so-called gravity trade models that measure trade intensity, it has been calculated that ten to twelve times as much trade intensity exists in Canada as is involved in cross-border trade with the United States.²⁸ Economists call this “home bias,” but they could equally call the amount of trade with a foreign country, expressed as a percentage of a country’s total foreign trade, “international bias.” In any case, the intensity of trade within each of the three North American countries far exceeds that of trade between each of these countries, and

always will. Each national economy is far from dissolving into some kind of larger, homogeneous North American amalgam. The same is true for the countries in the European Union.

It can be argued that each North American country values its interactions with the others in different ways. Mexico and Canada emphasize the trade-commercial dimension.²⁹ The United States emphasizes the security dimension. It has been claimed that the psycho-cultural dimension is still the most important, particularly because when the interests of the various countries diverge somewhat, as they have, the burden is on diplomacy to smooth differences and coordinate policy. Even before 9/11, the United States saw its relationship with Mexico in terms of the security problems related to drugs first and then to illegal immigration. For the United States, therefore, security trumped trade in its relationship with Mexico. After 9/11, security trumped trade with Canada. Why is the United States so paranoid?

In fact, the United States is *not* paranoid, vis-à-vis either of its near neighbours or the global system. In fairness to Canada and Mexico, however, the security problems with which the United States must contend stem from forces well beyond their borders. Drugs come from Colombia and other countries worldwide. The drug lords use Mexico largely as a conduit, but a conduit that has become so corrosive for Mexican civil society that the “drug problem” is far worse for Mexico than for the United States, as former president Felipe Calderón has repeatedly said. Regarding the problem of terrorism, the United States because of its worldwide responsibilities and presence is the primary target, not Canada and not Mexico.³⁰ Hence the United States, although by no means ignoring the importance of trade and commerce, especially in an era of considerable financial stringency, must continue to give priority, even though perhaps just by a slender margin, to security matters over economic matters.

At the intergovernmental level, the greatest novelty in diplomatic approach was introduced by Canada in the first years of the Obama administration. This novelty involved a new diplomatic focus. Instead of attempting to deal with its North American partners in terms of annual trilateral meetings, Ottawa made the argument that relations between the United States and Canada and between the United States and Mexico were so different from each other that each set of relations should be handled separately and on its own terms. In effect, this was the death knell for the NAFTA process. It signalled a return to bilateralism with the United States, instigated, ironically, not by the United States in some implicit plan to “divide and rule” or in terms of some “hub and spokes” notion of imperium, but by one of the two smaller partners, Canada. The Harper government took the lead and the Obama administration reluc-

tantly acceded. Mexico, with its hands full on the US border because of the out-of-control drug problem, quietly followed. In North America, Canada jettisoned multilateralism on the grounds that it was not working.

Canada took this distancing from Mexico a step further. Worried about an apparent loophole in its admittedly extremely generous asylum policy through which dissidents and possibly criminal elements in Mexico could claim asylum in Canada, Canada abruptly altered its immigration policy toward Mexico. Rather than alter the law governing its asylum policy, it instead demanded visas of Mexican nationals travelling to Canada. Despite protests from the Mexican government, this change was not entirely unanticipated in Mexico City. Once again, however, the policies of Canada and the policies of the United States were somewhat at odds with regard to Mexico. The NAFTA accord was intended to increase openness and multilateral cooperation, but on another issue, immigration policy, it was fragmenting and coming apart.

In the summer of 2011, driven in part by Canadian business leaders, the newly elected Harper government appeared to be staking out new territory with implications for North American relations, boldly inviting China to open a new partnership with Canada in trade and commerce. Gone were the anxieties over human rights policies in China and the concern over faltering efforts at democratic governance. In their place was a new enthusiasm for Chinese foreign investment in Canada and the prospect of new joint projects, particularly in the field of energy. China was even becoming a player in oil sands development. Who can predict where these promising initiatives might lead? What they suggest, however, is that frustration with the expansion of trade and investment in North America is contributing to more offshoring of jobs and more global substitution of trade priority.³¹ Will China someday replace the United States as Canada's largest trading partner? Some Canadian analysts seem to think so.

How Change in Domestic Politics Affects Foreign Policy

Regarding the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy, three momentous events occurred in North America in the past decade, one in each country. First, Vicente Fox and his National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional, or PAN) were elected to government in Mexico City in 2000, replacing the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional, or PRI) and bringing democracy back to Mexico. For more than seventy years, the PRI had reigned without interruption. For an orderly change of political leadership to occur according to democratic principles, democracy must have deep roots. Democracy triumphed in Mexico with the 2000 elec-

tion, making many things possible in foreign policy, including a subtle reorientation away from the rest of Latin America toward North America.³² Elites gave up some of their European, soft-left bias in favour of more educational, cultural, political, and especially business ties with the rest of the continent, especially the United States.³³ The promise of democracy made NAFTA possible; for its part, NAFTA encouraged the further development of the democratic process in Mexico through the press and through corporate support.³⁴ Mexico kept the PAN in power for more than eleven consecutive years. With the return of the PRI to power in late 2012, Mexico established itself for the first time as a conventional democracy in which political parties alternate successfully.

Second, an African American, Barack Obama, was elected to the presidency of the United States in 2008. War-weary and worried about its social programs and economy, the United States sought change, particularly generational change, in 2008. Without the support of the sixteen-to-thirty generation, President Obama would probably never have been elected, but the onset of the Great Recession was also genuinely responsible for his victory. Highly popular in both Canada and Mexico, he raised expectations in each country. Each country expected more of the United States because they could identify with its president. In many respects, however, Obama has been a middle-of-the-road president, and his foreign policy has reflected as much. He has been prudent and realistic, open but not deeply committed to change in foreign policy toward either Canada or Mexico. Indeed, public opinion in each of the three countries has perhaps not been supportive of any grand new schemes for North American economic initiatives. In his second term, President Obama has promised a strong liberal program of reform. What impact, if any, this political orientation will have on America's neighbours, especially regarding environmental protection, remains to be seen.

Finally, in the 2011 federal election, political change also struck Canada. Never since Confederation had the Liberal Party of Canada failed to win an election or fill the role of official opposition, to which the New Democratic Party (NDP) was elevated for the first time ever. Moreover, the Bloc Québécois, a federal political party that had promoted Quebec's secession from Canada since 1993, virtually disappeared. And, after a number of years as a minority governing party, the Conservative Party of Canada formed a majority government for the first time.

What does all of this mean for Canadian foreign policy and Canada's relations with its neighbours? First, as a majority party, the Conservative Party will mostly set the agenda, determine legislation, and make foreign

policy decisions. However, the very fact that the NDP is so well situated electorally means that the Conservative Party will be forced to craft its foreign policy with an eye to that party. What is Prime Minister Stephen Harper likely to see?

In the coming years, Harper is likely to adopt foreign policy positions designed to block further NDP gains. This means that he will be more aware of Quebec and of Quebec's positions on different issues. He will try to address the NDP's type of issues before they arise politically. Since the NDP is the most nationalistic of Canadian federal parties, the Conservative Party will have more leeway to distance itself from the United States than if the Liberal Party had been the official opposition. For instance, the shift toward China has a business foundation, but it is also the case that dissociating Canada from the US position regarding Chinese behaviour in the South China Sea, for example, is not likely to result in much of an electoral penalty. Adopting distinctively Canadian positions on issues even when these are at cross-purposes with US policy will not cause much of a backlash from the NDP. In terms of Canadian attitudes toward foreign affairs, the Conservative Party has a virtual free hand with regard to its foreign policy choices.

Second, as a unified polity, Canada is likely to be able to craft its foreign policy more boldly than in the past. When the Liberal Party was in power, it always worried about what the Quebec wing would think about its formulation and conduct of foreign policy. National unity was always a concern. But with the official opposition assuming a very pro-Quebec position, the Conservatives can respond to the NDP and not to some fear that a particular policy is likely to jeopardize Canadian national unity. It is clear that this new orientation will put even more pressure on the NDP's leadership to adopt policies that can unify the party. No longer composed of just its Toronto base and its western, more free trade-oriented wing, the NDP with its strong Quebec foundation will now find challenge in diversity.

Third, as long as the Conservatives are in power, the kinds of issues that appealed to the Canadian electorate under the Liberals may diminish. Liberal think tanks, liberal news outlets, and liberal spokesmen are likely to find less financial support or opportunity for expression. It is not that the Conservatives will reach toward the right, just that the Conservatives have no reason to favour Liberal Party-type issues.

Canada could well become more polarized on issues that profoundly divide the NDP and the Conservative Party. The latter will still possess all the levers for making foreign policy and shaping public opinion that any majority government enjoys. Harper is a master of strategy and tactics

and is not likely to overreach; nor is he likely to allow backbenchers to embarrass him in the face of provocations by the NDP. Still, major foreign policy debates could emerge around issues that have less of a growth and more of a distributional quality, and more of an ideational character. For instance, moral debates could absorb Canadian energies and, combined with Canadian desire to appease China for commercial and trade reasons, could create greater distance between Canada and the United States on some important global issues.

In the end, the emergence of the PAN and the reaffirmation of democracy in Mexico did have profound consequences for the interaction among the North American countries. The election of President Obama has reoriented American foreign policy toward a realist outlook expressed by both former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.³⁵ It is only reasonable to assume that the new alignment of political forces in Canada will have some impact on the way Canada makes its foreign policy, and therefore also on the interaction among the governments in North America.³⁶

Conclusion

This chapter began with a simple question: Was 9/11 a watershed for interstate relations in North America? Certainly the impact was undeniable. A trend toward closer economic and political relations among the United States, Canada, and Mexico was halted. Efforts to keep the borders open to the flow of people and goods paralleled the efforts to make them secure in a time of high tension over terrorism worldwide. Governments succeeded in counterterrorism but at high cost globally and to some extent in North America. The infrastructure personnel, training, and delays necessary to safeguard the airlines are only one example of the cost imposed on ordinary people by the scourge of terrorism.

To examine this question in the larger context of historical events, however, we examined the situation in North America at three levels. First, we looked at the impact of world developments on politics in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Next, we examined the relations among the three governments, especially economic relations. Finally, we examined the impact of domestic politics on the making of foreign policy. Several striking conclusions emerged.

First, notwithstanding the evident impact of 9/11 on relations in North America, other events have had an equal or even greater impact, but not necessarily in the same direction or in the same fashion. To some degree, technology has dampened the negative consequence of 9/11 on border procedures. And surely the coming of democracy to Mexico and

the changes of government in the United States and Canada have huge consequence as well for North American relations.

Second, the rise of China and its significance for both economic relations and world politics may eclipse anything experienced after 9/11 in North America, especially regarding the nature and expansion of trade and commercial relations. To confuse the effects is to misunderstand the dynamic of globalization.

Third, the task of coordinating policy among three governments with differing emphases is a continuing challenge. Canada and Mexico stress business and trade relations. Although scarcely ignoring the trade-commercial dimension, the United States focuses on security and defence matters. The psycho-cultural dimension remains pre-eminent as these governments attempt to coordinate policy across these divergent dimensions of interest and role in world politics.

NOTES

- 1 Three excellent compendiums on relations in North America are: Patrick James and Mark Kasoff, eds., *Canadian Studies in the New Millennium* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Patrick James, Nelson Michaud, and Marc J. O'Reilly, eds., *Handbook of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006); and Greg Anderson and Chris Sands, eds., *Forgotten Partnership Redux* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2011).
- 2 Thomas Homer-Dixon, "The Rise of Terrorism," *Foreign Policy* 128 (January-February 2002): 52-62; Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Ian Lesser et al., *Countering the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 1999).
- 3 Nelson Michaud, "Souveraineté et sécurité: Le dilemme de la politique étrangère dans l'après 11 septembre," *Études internationales* 33, 4 (December 2002) : 647-65.
- 4 D.K. Alper, "Trans-Boundary Environmental Relations in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 27, 3 (Autumn 1997): 359-83.
- 5 Greg Anderson, "The Compromise of Embedded Liberalism, American Trade Remedy Law, and Canadian Softwood Lumber: Can't We All Just Get Along?" *Canadian Foreign Policy* 10, 2 (Winter 2003): 87-108.
- 6 Louis Bélanger et al., "Most Safely on the Fence? A Roundtable of a 'Canadian' Foreign Policy after 9/11," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 11, 1 (Spring 2004): 97-118.
- 7 Raising some of the central questions is Kim Richard Nossal, "Canadian Foreign Policy after 9/11: Realignment, Reorientation, or Reinforcement," in *Foreign Policy Realignment in the Age of Terror*, ed. Leonard Cohen, Brian Job, and Alexander Moens (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002).