Losing Our Voice? Canada's Decline as a Consequence of Free-Riding

By

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As a middle power on the international stage, Canada has pursued a foreign security policy that relied heavily on great power benefactors, first Great Britain and, since World War II, the United States. This was a sensible strategy, as Canada does not posses sufficient economic and military resources to secure itself from great power threats or to advance its global interests these great powers, and its two benefactors had largely benign intentions toward Canada. Since the 1970s, as technological advances and strategic changes have increasingly made the defence of Canadian airspace, sea-lanes and border crossings of paramount importance for the United States, Canadian governments have been faced with the temptation to free-ride on their southern neighbour for security. After all, if Canada fails to fund its armed forces to participate on a reasonable footing in continental defence, it stands to reason that the United States would be compelled to do the job for us at their own expense, lest their own national security strategy be undermined by threats that exploit Canadian unpreparedness.

The problem with free-riding, however, is that it may come at the price of sovereignty and influence. After all, a nation that does not even participate credibly in the provision of its own national security is something less than a fully sovereign nation; it becomes, instead, somewhat of a dependency of another state. In addition, even if sovereignty is not truly threatened, the free-rider runs the risk of losing the ability to influence the direction of the national security policies of its benefactor. In this vein, many have argued that Canadian

stinginess in the defence theatre has undercut its ability to influence both its European NATO allies and, more importantly, the United States.[1]

Our purpose in this paper is to investigate this entire causal chain. Has Canada, indeed, been free riding on the United States in the security theatre? Has its defence spending and support for continental and alliance defence been declining and, if so, has it offset defence cutbacks with other economic or policy sidepayments to the United States? If Canada has been a free-rider, is there any evidence that Canada has lost influence, or have Canadian policymakers been able to remain influential, thereby attaining its security interests at minimum cost?

To this end, our paper is divided into four sections. In the first section, we will examine the logic of middle power alliance behaviour and the costs and benefits of free-riding. The second section will investigate whether Canada has been free riding on NATO and the US in the security realm over the last three decades by examining three indicators: Canadian defence spending/GDP compared to other NATO members; the policies espoused by Canadian defence White Papers; and the other policy support Canada might offer to its ally to compensate for lower levels of defence spending. The third section then explores whether, in light of reduced Canadian contributions to national defence and alliance commitments, Canada has lost influence over American foreign security policy. Our findings are that, at least since the early 1990s, Canada's commitment to defence and security issues has declined and its influence in Washington has dropped correspondingly. In the concluding section, therefore, we argue that, in

[1] See, for example, Molot, Maureen Appel and Norman Hillmer, "The Diplomacy of Decline", pp. 1-33 in Norman Hillmer and Maureen Appel Molot, eds., *Canada Among Nations 2002: Fading Power*, (Toronto : J. Lorimer and Co., 2002); Norrin M. Ripsman, "The Independence of the Weak: Canadian Economic and Political Weakness as a Source of Independent Defence Decisions under Mulroney," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, vol. 8, no. 3 (Spring 2001), pp. 1-16; Douglas Alan Ross, "From a Cheap Ride, to a Free Ride, to No Ride at All?," *International Journal*, Vol. ?, No. ? (199?), 721-730; +++++

the current era of heightened American insecurity after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Canadian influence is likely to decline further if it does not measurably increase either its material contributions to hemispheric defence, its policy support sidepayments to Washington, or both.

I. Middle Powers, Alliance Politics and Free-Riding

As a middle power, Canada lacks the power resources to order the international environment or provide fully for its own security, particularly when threats to Canadian interests emanate from great powers.[2] Instead, it relies on multilateral alliances anchored by a great power benefactor to secure itself and multilateral institutions to and further its policy objectives. These institutions give middle powers a seat at the table—and, consequently some influence—when the military, political and economic affairs that are most important to it are discussed. In return, they help defray some of the costs of the great power's global interests and provide the great power with diplomatic support and legitimacy. Nonetheless, the structure of these alliances and the logic of public goods, create the incentives for the weaker allies to free ride on the great powers.

As Mancur Olson explains, it is difficult for a large group of people to provide public goods—i.e. goods that are non-rival and non-excludable—because doing so requires a contribution from all members. He explains that "[t]he individual member of the typical large

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[2] See, for example, J. King Gordon, ed., *Canada's Role as a Middle Power* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1966); Annette Baker Fox, *The Politics of Attraction: Four Middle Powers and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics* (London: Macmillan Press, 1984); Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott and Kim Richard Nossal, eds., *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1993); and Kim Richard

organization is in a position analogous to that of the firm in a perfectly competitive market, or the taxpayer in the state: his own efforts will not have a noticeable effect on the situation of his organization."[3] Thus because "those who do not purchase or pay for any of the public or collective good cannot be excluded or kept from sharing in the consumption of the good," Olson asserts that rational actors will try to free-ride on the efforts of other members.[4] Therefore, he concludes that public goods are unlikely to be provided by a large group of people unless a government can coerce actors or provide incentives for them to cooperate. The only other scenario under which the good will be provided is if a sufficiently powerful actor finds it in its interest to provide the public good by paying the bulk of the cost.

While Olson is an economist and his theory deals primarily with economic issues, he also argues that the dynamics of collective action are likely to play out in other fields as well. Thus for example, Olson writes that collective action can explain "the apparent tendency for large countries to bear disproportionate shares of the burdens of multinational organizations, like the United Nations and NATO, and the continual complaints that international organizations and alliances are not given adequate (optimal) amounts of resources."[5] Thus, military alliances also produce a type of public good (i.e., security for all their members), and should also present incentives for members to free ride, particularly when a great power, such as the United States, is present, which is capable of footing the bill by itself.[6]

Nossal, *Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

[3] Mancur Olson jr., *The Logic of Collective Action*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965, p. 16.

[4] Ibid., p. 14.

[5] Ibid., p. 36.

[6] See, for example, Mancur Olson and Richard Zeckhauser, "An Economic Theory of Alliances", *Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 48, no. 3 (August 1966), pp. 266-79. Richard Cornes

In alliances such as NATO or NORAD, where the member states are all democracies, weaker powers have an even greater incentive to free ride than in other alliances. For, while most international institutions afford greater bargaining power to the larger states by virtue of their great power, relations between democracies are somewhat different in character. Even great power democracies respect the domestic political and economic weaknesses of democratic partners and, where possible, avoid making demands on allied governments that risk undermining their domestic political position.[7] Therefore, savvy small and middle power governments can often escape or reduce their alliance commitments by projecting domestic weakness.[8]

There are potential risks of free riding, though. After all, as George Liska argues, military alliances are not only formed to solve collective action problems. They also allow member states to achieve some degree of inter-allied control and to advance particular international policy agendas.[9] Indeed, Paul Schroeder believes that the notion of 'interallied control' is what has motivated many states throughout history to participate in military alliances. Thus he explains that although "technically, alliances are mutual security pacts…functionally, alliances serve many diverse purposes and are best considered as general tools for management

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and Todd Sandler argue, however, that military alliances ought to be considered not fully public goods, but applications of the joint-product model instead, which "is really a generalization of the pure public good model, since the former permits an activity *q* to produce multiple outputs that may be purely public, impurely public, or private to the agents." Thus, they may be more properly referred to as "club goods". *The Theory of Externalities, Public Goods and Club Goods*, 2nd Edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 529.

[7] See, for example, Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Norrin M. Ripsman, *Peacemaking by Democracies: The Effect of State Autonomy on the Post-World-War Settlements* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2002), pp. +++++.

[8] Ripsman, "The Independence of the Weak."

and control in international affairs."[10] For small and middle ranking powers, as Joseph Grieco observes, alliances and international organizations are crucial because of the 'voice opportunities' they provide in order to influence the policies of great powers. As Grieco explains, these smaller states "seek to ensure that the rules…will provide sufficient opportunities for them to voice their concerns and interests and thereby prevent or at least ameliorate their domination by stronger partners."[11] The danger is that a weaker state that fails to contribute its fair share to the alliance could be denied these ancillary benefits, which might be of considerable importance.

From the Canadian perspective, where alliances have always been considered important for such voice opportunities, the prospects of being denied influence would be a considerable blow.[12] The balance of this paper will explore whether Canada has, indeed, been a free rider in the security area in recent years and, if so, whether it has suffered a loss of influence as a result.

II. Has Canada's been Free Riding?

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[9] George Liska, *Alliances and the Third World*, (Baltimore, Md.: John Hopkins Press, 1965), pp. 24-35.

[10] Paul W. Schroeder, "Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management", pp. 227-52, in Klaus Knorr ed., *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, (Lawrence, KS: +++++, 1976), 255.

[11] Joseph Grieco, "The Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union and the Neorealist Research Programme", *Review of International Studies*, vol. 21, no. +++++ (1995), p. 34. See also Joseph Grieco, "State Interests and Institutional Rule Trajectories: A Neorealist Interpretation of the Maastricht Treaty and European Economic and Monetary Union", pp. 261-305, in Benjamin Frankel ed., *Realism: Restatements and Renewal*. (London: Frank Cass, 1996), p. 287.

[12] Joseph Jockel, for example, argues that Canadian particpation in NORAD was driven primarily by the desire to keep some control over Canadian air defences, which otherwise would have been under exclusive American control. *No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States, and the Origins of North American Air Defence, 1945-1958* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987).

While much noise has been made in recent years about the declining Canadian defence contribution, it behoves us to investigate this claim carefully. After all, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, all Western nations reduced their contributions to national defence. To assess whether Canada has been free riding, therefore, we must first examine systematically how Canadian defence spending compares to that of its alliance partners. Secondly, we shall consider whether Canadian defence policy, as reflected in its occasional defence White Papers, has been predicated upon free riding. Finally, since recipients of public goods can "pay" for their goods in other ways, particularly through the use of sidepayments to more powerful actors, we shall explore whether Canadian governments have offset their reduced commitment to alliances and defence with policy support sidepayments to their leading allies.[13]

a. Relative Defence Contributions

The most commonly used burden-sharing measure is defense expenditures as a percent of GDP because it allows us to measure the internal sacrifice a state makes in order to contribute to the collective effort, and to establish comparisons with other allies of different size and wealth. Table 1 presents this data for the entire alliance from 1970 to 1997.

Table 1 : NATO Members' Defence Spending as a Percentage of GDP[14]

	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995	1997
Belgium	2.8	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.6	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.6
Canada	**2.4**	**2.0**	**2.1**	**2.1**	**2.0**	**1.9**	**1.9**	**1.7**	**1.6**	**1.3**
Denmark	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7
France	3.9	3.8	4.1	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.0
Germany	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.0	2.8	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6

[13] +++++Keohane?+++++

[14] +++++Sandler and Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO*,+++++, p. 43.

Greece	4.7	6.7	6.6	6.2	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.6	4.4	4.6
Italy	2.6	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.9
Lux'burg	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.8
Nethland	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.0	1.7
Norway	3.7	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.2
Portugal	6.9	3.9	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.6
Spain	-	2.1	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4
Turkey	2.3	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4	3.3
UK	5.8	5.1	5.3	4.5	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.4	2.9	2.7
US	7.1	5.4	5.9	6.3	5.7	5.2	4.8	4.4	3.9	3.4

A quick glance at Table 1 indicates that Canada's contribution to national defence was amongst the lowest as a percentage of GDP among NATO members throughout this period. Moreover, by 1997, Canadian the Canadian commitment to national defence was surpassed by NATO laggards, such as Spain and Turkey, leaving only Luxembourg with a lower contribution as a percentage of GDP. When compared to its primary ally, the United States, Canadian defence spending/GDP never exceeded much more than a third of the comparable US figure. In these terms, Canada clearly contributes well below its weight to its own defence.

Defence spending as a percentage of GDP, however, is an incomplete picture of the lopsided extent of Canada's defence contribution. It only indicates the 'cost' side of the equation, without relating it to the benefit each ally receives from collective defence. Todd Sandler and John Forbes offer a measure of the *benefit* countries receive from defence cooperation based on three inputs: (1) the ally's share of the alliance's population; (2) its share of alliance-wide GDP; and (3) its share of the alliance's exposed borders (i.e. borders not adjacent to an ally or a friendly country). These statistics are respective proxies for lives protected,

industrial base defended and territory protected. They compare this to a *burden* measure that represents the country's share of the total alliance defence expenditures.[15]

Table 2 : NATO Members' Alliance Benefits and Burdens[16]

	1975		1980		1985		1990		1994	
	Benefit	Burden	Benefit	Burden	Benefit	Burden	Benefit	Burden	Benefit	Burden
Belgium	1.24	1.34	1.25	1.61	0.91	0.70	1.03	0.99	1.01	0.87
Canada	**25.92**	**2.05**	**25.64**	**1.76**	**25.53**	**1.98**	**25.45**	**2.25**	**25.08**	**1.95**
Denmark	1.00	0.66	0.99	0.69	0.85	0.38	0.92	0.54	0.89	0.57
France	7.12	9.44	7.21	10.74	5.75	6.03	6.42	9.06	6.20	9.75
Germany	8.34	10.39	8.56	10.96	6.56	5.84	7.66	9.14	8.57	8.07
Greece	2.14	0.99	2.16	0.93	2.04	0.68	2.05	0.84	2.01	0.98
Italy	6.01	3.16	6.19	3.62	5.86	2.25	6.63	2.42	6.91	4.75
Lux'burg	0.05	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.04	0.27	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.02
Nethland	1.77	1.98	1.85	2.23	1.40	1.12	1.57	1.67	1.54	1.49
Norway	2.83	0.64	2.86	0.69	2.76	0.53	2.77	0.74	2.72	0.78
Portugal	1.00	0.59	0.98	0.35	0.78	0.19	0.82	0.40	0.94	0.50
Spain	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.26	1.16	3.76	1.98	3.43	1.73
Turkey	3.68	1.53	3.80	0.99	3.78	0.69	4.02	1.14	3.92	1.11
UK	6.94	7.52	7.44	10.25	6.30	6.43	6.70	8.00	6.26	7.26
US	31.96	59.64	31.06	55.13	34.19	71.99	30.16	60.81	30.48	60.18

Benefit stands for "Average Benefit Share" while *Burden* means "Defense Burden"

Using their measure, Table 2 presents NATO members' bang for their alliance buck. It is striking to notice how unique and privileged Canada's position is in NATO. While no other country has a benefit-to-burden ratios of more than 5:1, by virtue of the vast Canadian borders, Canada consistently receives 12 times more than it gives back! Compared to the United States, Canada derives approximately 25 times more per dollar spent on defence. This is powerful evidence that Canada has been, if not a free rider, then, in Richard Cornes and Todd Sandler's words, "an easy rider" within NATO, taking advantage of the importance of the defence of Canadian territory for American homeland defence.[17] Moreover, as we can see from both tables,

[15] Todd Sandler and John F. Forbes, "Burden Sharing and the Design of NATO," *Economic Inquiry* vol. 18, no. +++++, pp. 425-444.

[16] Reproduced from Sandler and Hartley, *The Political Economy of NATO,* pp. 45-46.

[17] Cornes and Sandler, *The Theory of Externalities, Public Goods and Club Goods,* p. 530.

the degree of easy riding has varied through time and has become particularly acute in the last few years. As time goes on, then, Washington—the big net contributor to alliance defence—appears to be accepting a greater relative defence commitment and writing off a greater portion of Canadian security.

b. Policy as Reflected in Canadian Defence White Papers

Canadian defence contributions indicate that Canada has been trending toward a free ride in the security theatre. In this section, we will consider whether, in fact Canadian defence policy is predicated upon a free or easy ride, or whether Canadian declaratory grand strategy envisions a more robust alliance commitment. We will take the last three Canadian defence White Papers (1971, 1987 and 1994) as the definitive statements of Canadian grand strategy.

The Trudeau government's 1971 defence White Paper was very much a free riding document. In it, the government noted that economic weakness technological changes, principally the Soviet attainment of parity with the US in intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), meant that the Canadian contribution to NORAD and continental defence would be of little consequence. As it states, "There is, unfortunately, not much Canada herself can do by way of effective direct defence that is of relevance against massive nuclear attack, given the present state of weapons technology, and the economic restraints on a middle power such as Canada."[18] In addition, since "the nations of Western Europe are growing more prosperous and are co-operating more closely," it concluded that "[t]he European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are now able to assume a greater share of the collective defence,

[18] Canada, Department of National Defence, *Defence in the 70s* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), p. 6.

particularly with respect to their own continent."[19] Consequently, the Canadian strategy was to shift the burden of continental and alliance-wide defence increasingly to the United States and European NATO members, while Canada took advantage of an easier ride to focus on other priorities, such as sovereignty protection.[20] Although the implementation of the White Paper's strategic blueprint was only partial, as American and European pressure led Trudeau to reaffirm a Canadian commitment to both NATO and NORAD, its tone clearly reflected a strategic decision to rely on a free ride.[21]

The Mulroney government's 1987 defence White Paper set a self-conscious tone of meeting Canadian obligations and avoiding a free ride. Indeed, at the outset, it cautioned against neutralism or the tendency to let Canadian allies provide our security on our behalf, noting that, under those circumstances, "[o]ur security would continue to depend on the deterrence provided by our former allies, but we would have opted out of any contribution to and, equally significantly, any say in the management of that deterrent."[22] Therefore, the document emphasises the significant contributions that Canada will make to facilitate an allied defence of North America, including: participation "in surveillance, warning, attack assessment and defence against air attack, and our participation in NATO and bilaterally with the United States in

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[19] Ibid., p. 5.

[20] Ibid. See also, J. L. Granatstein and Robert Bothwell, *Pirouette: Pierre Trudeau and Canadian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp. 3-35; and Ann Denholm Crosby, *Dilemmas in Defence Decision-Making: Constructing Canada's Role in NORAD, 1958-96* (London: Macmillian, 1998), p. 67.

[21] See D. W. Middlemiss and J. Sokolsky, *Canadian Defence: Decisions and Determinants* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989),pp. 39-41; Norrin M. Ripsman, "Big Eyes and Empty Pockets: the Two Phases of Mulroney's Defence Policy," pp. +++++ in Nelson Michaud and Kim Richard Nossal, eds., *Diplomatic Departures: The Conservative Era in Foreign Policy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002), pp. +++++.

[22] Canada, Department of National Defence, *Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy For Canada* (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1987), p. 3.

surveillance of Soviet submarine forces," by "making our territory and facilities available to our allies," and "through maritime forces in the Atlantic and the Pacific, through land and air forces at home and in Europe, and through NATO's common funded programs."[23] Moreover, to redress a commitment-capability gap that resulted from a free riding approach to defence, the Conservatives committed themselves to an annual increase in defence spending of no less than 2% above inflation for a period of fifteen years and a host of new weapon procurements and weapons modernisation plans.[24] While the end of the Cold War and economic constraints ultimately defeated the resolve expressed by the 1987 White Paper, it is clear that it represented a grand strategy that sought to diminish Canadian free riding.[25]

The Chrétien defence White Paper of 1993 once again reflected a shift away from burden sharing to a defence policy of restraint and, therefore, free or easy riding. This shift was largely attributed to changes in the international environment, notably the end of the Cold War, which reduced the threat to Canadian security. But it also stemmed from domestic constraints on policy making, particularly economic uncertainty and "large accumulated national debt." As the White Paper asserts, "At a time of diminishing resources, little money is available to deal with the demands of a post-industrial society—the need to repair obsolescent infrastructure, protect and foster a sustainable environment, care for an aging population, improve job training and reform entitlement programs—let alone military priorities in various regions of the world."[26] Indeed, in an extended "chapter" of the document, the government expanded on the notion that domestic

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[23] Ibid., pp. 17-20.

[24] Ibid., pp. 49-67. See also Michel Rossignol, *Canadian Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, 1988), pp. 25-29; Sokolsky, "The Bilateral Defence Relationship," pp. 178-179.

[25] See Ripsman, "Big Eyes and Empty Pockets."

fiscal circumstances were a key limit on Canada's ability to pursue an active defence policy. It noted, "As a consequence of the further decline in defence expenditure that forms the fiscal context of this paper, cuts will be deeper, and there will be more reductions, cancellations, and delays. In some areas, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces will do less."[27] To this end, the "chapter" on Canada-US defence cooperation, while affirming the continued importance of these arrangements for Canada, emphasised a restructuring and scaling back of the Canadian contribution to meet economic and strategic realities.[28] In other words, Canadian domestic economic difficulties would mean that Canada would rely more on the US to provide for continental defence.

The three defence policy White Papers issued since 1970, therefore, do not represent a consistent Canadian grand strategy predicated upon free riding. Policy differences between parties are evident, as the Mulroney Conservatives placed a heavier premium--in principle, if not in practice—on burden-sharing. Nonetheless, it is clear that the most recent defence White Paper and the defence approach of the current government reflect a preference for easy riding.

c. Sidepayments

Although we have seen strong evidence that Canada does not provide its share of national security goods and relies heavily upon its primary alliance partner, the US to meet its defence needs, it remains possible that the Canadian government through targeted foreign policy side payments that can, at least partially, offset the negative effects of its easy ride. Maxwell A.

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[26] Canada, Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper* (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1994), p. 7.

[27] Ibid., p. 10.

[28] Ibid., pp. 20-26.

Cameron defines side payments as "concessions intended to change the game by altering the other player's payoffs…[i.e.] increasing the gains for the large country."[29] Generally speaking, Canadian side payments to the United States in the area of security and defense take the form of two separate benefits provided to them. The first category of payments pertains to situations where Canada provides international leadership on issues of importance to Washington because it is better suited to do so, while in the second category Americans benefit from the Canadian "stamp of approval" on their policy initiatives. Extending even beyond the notion of legitimizing American actions, then, any Canadian word or deed that improves the image of the hegemon in the eyes of the international community is a tangible side payment.

As far as the first category of side payments is concerned, Canada is ideally-suited to provide international leadership that serves the United States when a problem is too small to be a priority on their agenda and where American activity would be viewed suspiciously. Many peacekeeping operations combine both factors and it clearly remains the area *par excellence* where Canada can make a substantial contribution to the international community in general, and to its southern neighbor in particular. An excellent example of recent Canadian peacekeeping leadership was when we sent 650 soldiers in Haiti in 1997 as part of a UN operation and where we had the largest national contingent.[30] Canada provided a similar contribution in Haiti in 2004. This is a particularly sensitive area for the United States since Haiti is in the Western Hemisphere and slightly over 1,000 kilometers from the coast of Florida. It is thus of great concern for the United States, but American leaders have to be careful not to play too great a

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[29] Maxwell A. Cameron, "North American Free Trade Negociations: Liberalization Games Between Asymmetric Players", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1997), p. 106.

[30] http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/constable_e.asp +++++Title of webpage? date accessed?+++++

role, lest they antagonize other states and populations in Central and South America. Similarly, Canada also made a substantial contribution in the Balkans between 1992 and 1995 by sending over 2,000 soldiers during that period and supplying a Canadian Brigadier-General, Greg Mitchell, to serve as Chief of Staff of the UN operation. By comparison, 748 American soldiers were involved in the same operation and only four countries—France, the United Kingdom, Jordan and Pakistan—sent more troops than Canada over the same period.[31] Thus, as Jockel concludes, while "Canadians and their governments…have recently been unwilling to sustain significant levels of military spending, [they have been] much more willing to use [the Canadian Forces], at least for peacekeeping operations."[32]

The second category of side payments, where Canada helps to legitimize American actions in the eyes of the international community, has become increasingly important over the last two or three decades. Indeed, because there is a growing technological gap between the United States and the rest of the world, American forces now prefer to handle the bulk of the fight themselves rather than having to coordinate with inferior weapon systems. In turn, however, this American capacity to act alone is counter-productive from a diplomatic standpoint because it is resented by many members of the international community. In this context, then, what the United States needs the most by its side is not foreign troops but rather foreign flags.

Canada's contribution to the legitimisation of American foreign security policy can come in two forms. Either Canadian governments can commit token forces to US-led missions abroad to demonstrate their active support, or they can make supportive policy statements that link to

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[31] http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/ +++++Title of webpage? date accessed?+++++

[32] Joseph T. Jockel, "Canada and the United States: Still Calm in the 'Remarkable Relationship'", pp. +++++-+++++ in Fen Osler Hampson and Maureen Appel Molot (eds.),

Canada's mostly benign international reputation to American initiatives. In other words, if we cannot always "walk the walk" it is still useful to Washington if we "talk the talk."

A review of the number of Canadian troops that fought alongside Americans over the last thirty years—4,000 in the 1991 Gulf War, 1,100 in Somalia, 2,000 in the Balkans, 2,000 in Afghanistan—demonstrates that Canada has indeed made such gestures of support on occasion. Of late, however, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's public willingness to understand the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks as symptomatic of a growing gap between rich and poor countries, Canada's failure to participate in George W. Bush's "coalition of the willing" against Iraq and Prime Minister Martin's refusal to cooperate with the United States on ballistic missile defence has dramatically reduced the policy sidepayments that Canada offers in the defence and security theatre. Thus, at least in recent years, the Canadian government has reduced the sidepayment of policy cover and legitimisation as a means of offsetting its easy ride.

In all respects, then, we see clear evidence of a shift to free or easy riding by the Canadian government in the defence theatre. Defence budgets as a percentage of GDP have declined steadily since the 1970s, and, in the same time period, the Canadian benefit to burden ratio (which was always astronomically high) has also increased somewhat. Furthermore, the Liberal Party's return to power after the Mulroney decade led to a both a return to a free riding tone in the 1994 defence White Paper and a decrease in policy support sidepayments to offset declning Canadian defence spending. We can conclude with confidence, therefore, that Canada has, at least of late, been an easy rider in the defence and security issue area. We shall now consider whether Canadian influence in Washington has declined as a result or not.

Canada Among Nations 1996: Big Enough to Be Heard, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press,

III. Has Canada's International Influence Declined?

There is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that Canada has lost its ability to influence its allies and, in particular, the United States. Over the last few years, for example, many books and articles have been written about Canada's decline as a world power in general, and its loss of influence in international forums in particular. Maureen Appel Molot and Norman Hillmer described how in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, "the same themes about Canada's plummeting national independence and international stature were sounded again and again" in the face of Canada's inability to play a meaningful role in the fight against terrorism.[33] Douglas Alan Ross cautioned that "Canadian officials are already excluded from meaningful military-strategic discussions concerning the NATO forces deployed in the United Nations Protection Force."[34] No less a foreign policy authority than former Minister of External Affairs Joe Clark bluntly declared that at present "Canada is off the radar screen" in foreign capitals.[35] Finally, Andrew Cohen published a book with a title that says it all: *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World*.

Our task here is to beyond this anecdotal evidence to determine whether Canada's influence has, indeed, declined. Since our principal focus in this paper is on the influence Canada has on the United States, we will investigate this in two stages. First, we will consider whether Canadian prime ministers have sufficient access to the American President, for it stands

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1996), p. 121.

[33] Molot and Hillmer, "The Diplomacy of Decline," p. 6.

[34] Ross, "From a Cheap Ride, to a Free Ride, to No Ride at All?"

[35] Andrew Cohen, "Canadian-American Relations: Does Canada Matter in Washington? Does It Matter If Canada Doesn't Matter?" pp. 35-48, in Norman Hillmer and Maureen Appel Molot, eds., *Canada Among Nations 2002: Fading Power*, Toronto : J. Lorimer and Co., 2002), 37.

to reason that a prerequisite of influence is access. Second, we explore whether American policy reflects Canadian preoccupations by looking at two foreign policy areas that were identified by the Chrétien government as priorities when it came into power in 1993: human security, and economic development and trade.

a. Gaining Access to the President

Although access is not a sufficient condition to exert influence, it is nevertheless a necessary condition. It follows, then, that the more frequently our Prime Minister meets with their President, the more opportunities he has to influence American policy.[36] Most of the meetings between the two leaders take place during set institutional summit meetings. We are particularly involved in four of those with the United States: NATO, the G-8, APEC, and the Summits of the Americas. These settings guarantee that, no matter what, Canada at least has access to the American President on multiple occasions. However, the potential for influence is much more diffuse when other leaders are present; this is why one-on-one meetings have to be considered the most significant in any study of Canadian influence.

In terms of one-on-one meetings, it is difficult to determine whether there has been a meaningful reduction in access. While there clearly was such a reduction between the Mulroney

[36] Joseph T. Jockel has suggested that perhaps the number of bilateral meetings is not so significant because, during the Chrétien-Clinton era "it became clearer and clearer that the two heads of government got along just fine without having to engage in an active social life together." "Canada and the United States: Still Calm in the 'Remarkable Relationship'", in Fen Osler Hampson and Maureen Appel Molot (eds.), *Canada Among Nations 1996: Big Enough to Be Heard*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1996), p. 112. While that may be technically correct, face-to-face meetings still help to preserve and reinforce a good relationship, as they did from Mulroney and Reagan. Furthermore, contentious issues, such as softwood lumber, split-run newspapers, the anti-personnel land-mine ban and the ICC still prevailed during these years. Finally, Chrétien also served as Prime Minister during the presidency of George W. Bush, a man

years and the Chrétien/Martin governments, since 1993 the Liberal prime ministers have conferred with their US counterparts about as frequently as Trudeau did. From 1971 to 1984, US presidents met individually with Trudeau (Ronald Reagan did not meet Joe Clark during his brief tenure as Prime Minister) on eleven separate occasions, or slightly less frequently than once a year. In contrast, Mulroney had one-on-one meetings with Reagan, George Bush, Sr. and Bill Clinton no fewer than twenty times, or more than twice a year. The reduction in official visits and private meetings under Chrétien to ten since 1994 (or slightly under once a year), therefore, represents a considerable short-term reduction, but no significant change from the 1970s.[37]

We can conclude, therefore, that access to the American president has declined in the last decade to return to its former levels of the 1970s. It is interesting to note that access increased significantly during the Mulroney years, precisely the years when Canada evinced a greater concern for burden sharing in official defence policy proclamations and provided greater policy cover sidepayments. But, of course, reduced access does not necessarily translate into reduced influence; therefore, we will proceed to analyze specific foreign policy issue areas to see if Canadian influence over Washington has, indeed, been declining in recent years.

b. Substantive Issue Area I – Human Security

No area was more central to Canadian foreign policy during the 1990s than human security, and in no other domain did Canada fail so completely to influence the United States. Just about every major human security initiative sponsored by Chrétien (e.g., the Anti-Personnel

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with whom Chrétien did not see eye-to-eye. Therefore, face-to-face meetings should still have been important tools for gaining access and representing Canadian concerns.

[37] See "Presidential Visits to Canada," http://www.usembassycanada.gov/content/content.asp?section=can_usa&subsection1=general&

Landmine Ban, the International Criminal Court, the Nuclear Test Ban, etc.) was either received coldly (the latter two) or rejected outright by the Clinton administration, and then systematically rejected and cancelled by the George W. Bush White House. We shall consider each of these initiatives and the human security agenda as a whole.

The major argument for advancing a human security agenda, as Lloyd Axworthy explained in countless speeches he gave throughout his four and a half year tenure as Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, was that the end of the Cold War had reduced the risks of conflicts and wars between states, while at the same time civil wars, terrorism, the drug trade and environmental degradation had decreased the security of most individuals. According to the Minister, there was a need for a new "soft power" approach that advances the human security agenda to complement the traditional hard-power, national security one, an approach that would require "strengthening legal norms and building the capacity to enforce them."[38] Ultimately, then, human security needs new international rules and institutions in order to thrive. This is why Axworthy targeted specific measures and promoted the adoption of three particular treaties: the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Anti-Personnel Landmine Ban Treaty, and the Treaty of Rome, which created the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Axworthy realized that the signature of the United States was crucial for the success of all three projects and his intention was to convince the Clinton Administration that it was in the American interest to sign on. He knew that human security would only be accepted—and those three treaties signed—by the American government if it came to similar conclusions concerning the new state of the world. This is why the crux of his argument in every speech he gave on

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document=visits, accessed, May 25, 2005; "Visits to the U.S. by Foreign Heads of State and Government," http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/c1792.htm, accessed, May 25, 2005.

American soil was that "part of America's global responsibility is to recognize that the world has changed, and that the old ways of doing business no longer hold."[39] His strategy for influencing the United States on these issues was two-fold: on one hand, he would try a direct approach by bringing up the topic of human security and its multiple initiatives in direct meetings with his American counterpart, Madeleine Albright; on the other, he would count on the norm-building effect of the increasing number of states signing on to these Treaties to put pressure on the United States not to be perceived as a "pariah".

Between March 1996 and June 2000, Axworthy had one-on-one meetings with American secretaries of state (one with Warren Christopher, the others with Madeleine Albright) on eight separate occasions, at least five of which record that either "human security" or the relevant treaties were on the agenda. The most notable, and perhaps most important, encounter between Axworthy and Albright was when the Secretary came for an official visit to Ottawa on March 9-10, 1998. This was a crucial period for the human security agenda since it was only three months after the signing of the Landmine Ban Treaty in Ottawa (where the US came as an 'observer'), three months before the Rome Conference would open to discuss the creation of the ICC, and eighteen months after the signature of the CTBT, but before its crucial ratification phase. The press briefing of March 10 was an indicator of where the United States stood on these issues. While Foreign Minister Axworthy mentioned that he and Secretary Albright had discussed land mine issues and how, in the case of Serbia at least, the "World Court,

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[38] Canadian Foreign Affairs Department, "Human Security: Safety for People in a Changing World," http://www.humansecurity.gc.ca/safety_changingworld-en.asp, accessed, May 25, 2005.

[39] Lloyd Axworthy, "The Landmine Campaign in Context," speech given at the Foreign Policy Association in New York, June 19, 1998.

http://webapps.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/MinPub/Publication.asp?publication_id=375727, accessed, May 25, 2005.

International Court, Criminal Court, [was] providing a real deterrent and a real strong signal that basic norms and standards have to be lived up to," the Albright remained purposefully vague on the need to "discourage further international trade in land mines" and did not utter a word about the Criminal Court.[40]

The chronology of events over the next eighteen months indicates a clear effort on Axworthy's to convince Albright that human security and soft power were the wave of the future. The results, however, are spotty at best and highlight some of the obvious differences between a middle power and a super power. Thus, for example, Axworthy's visit to Washington of November 30, 1998 generated no reaction whatsoever from Albright because Yasser Arafat happened to be in the US capital the same day. On the topic of the Landmine Treaty in particular, the Foreign Affairs Minister could only report that "the United States says that it cannot sign the Ottawa Convention at present because of its "unique responsibilities."[41] On May 27, 1999, he was back in Washington to talk about the situation in Kosovo. Once again, Axworthy used the opportunity of a joint press availability with his American counterpart to indicate that bringing Slobodan Milosevic to justice in The Hague was clearly part of "what we call the human security agenda" while Albright simply framed it in terms of resolving the Kosovo problem.[42]

While the Clinton administration was no more than lukewarm about the ICC and absolutely opposed to the Landmine Ban, it favoured the CTBT, a treaty which the United States had signed in September 1996. Three years later, however, the President sent the treaty for ratification in Congress, where it was promptly defeated by a group of Senators who clearly did

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[40] http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980310a.html, accessed, May 25, 2005.

[41] Lloyd Axworthy, "The Landmine Campaign in Context", June 19, 1998 +++++source?+++++.

[42] http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1999/990527a.html, accessed, May 25, 2005.

not want to tie the hands of the United States with an international treaty. The administration did not abandon the fight so easily, and on March 13, 2000, Secretary Albright announced that the President was appointing a Special Advisor on the issue of CTBT to act as liaison with Congress. Meanwhile, on the presidential campaign trail, Republican candidate George W. Bush declared that the Treaty "does not stop proliferation, especially in renegade regimes. It is not verifiable. It is not enforceable. And it would stop us from ensuring the safety and reliability of our nation's deterrent, should the need arise."[43] As soon as George W. Bush became President, it was clear that he would kill US participation in the CTBT.

Axworthy made his final visit to Washington in mid-June 2000 where his objective was to "undertake a number of activities to advance the human security agenda, including talks with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright."[44] This last call fell on deaf ears as the Secretary was busy hosting a historic Summit between leaders of both North and South Korea and did not even react publicly to Axworthy's visit. In these last few months of their administration, the entire Clinton cabinet was focused on salvaging its legacy—the President was desperately trying to salvage the Camp David II Accords—and neither he nor his Secretary of State was interested in Canada's "human security agenda". Thus, when Clinton finally decided to sign the Treaty of Rome on December 31, 2000, he indicated in his statement that the Treaty was still flawed and wrote that "I will not, and do not recommend, that my successor submit the treaty to the Senate for advice and consent until our fundamental concerns are satisfied," leaving its future very much in doubt.[45] In the end, it did not matter because his successor not only took his advice but

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[43] September 2000 issue of *Arms Control Today*, pp. 3-7

[44] http://webapps.dfaitmaeci.gc.ca/MinPub/Publication.asp?publication_id=377851&Language=E , accessed, May 25, 2005.

[45] +++++source?+++++

even formally informed the United Nations on May 6, 2002 that he was repudiating Clinton's signature and that the United States had no intention of being involved with the ICC. Statements from Donald Rumsfeld and others indicate that the new administration fears the ICC would become a "kangaroo court" where any state could charge American soldiers with war crimes to obtain political revenge.[46]

The last nail in the coffin of Canadian efforts to influence American policy towards adopting a human security approach was the Bush administration's February 27, 2004 announcement that the US would not sign the Landmine Ban Treaty either. It declared that the US did not object to the goal of the treaty, reminding everybody that the US Armed Forces have not used landmines since 1991, but rather that the US refused to be handcuffed by an international treaty.

Thus, despite repeated Canadian efforts to persuade the United States to endorse the human security agenda, which Canada had invested a good deal of its prestige and reputation in, the Liberal government was unable to sway US policy, even during the years of so-called compatibility between Chrétien and Clinton.

c. Substantive Issue Area II – Economic Development and Trade

If human security was the signature of the Foreign Affairs department, then free-trade and globalization were the priority of the Prime Minister himself, as Mr. Chrétien's numerous and much publicized expeditions at the head of 'Team Canada' can attest. Thus, after a 1993 campaign in which he was highly critical of the Free-Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, Prime Minister Chrétien looked to increase trade relations between the two countries, as

[46] +++++source?+++++

well as extend the trading zone to the entire western hemisphere. While President Clinton and himself generally saw eye to eye on these issues, the Canadian Prime Minister generally could not influence American policy where they disagreed, particularly when President Clinton was facing extensive opposition from Congress.

+++++UNDER CONSTRUCTION+++++

d. Comparison to Mulroney's Influence

+++++UNDER CONSTRUCTION+++++

+++++overall section conclusion+++++

Conclusions and Recommendations

Middle powers depend on multilateral institutions and alliances to secure themselves in a world of great powers. If, as Olson and Zeckhauser suggest, they are likely to ride for free on the backs of their great power benefactors, however, they could squander much of the political advantages that their alliances offer them. In particular, they could lose the voice opportunities that allow them to influence, restrain and direct their great power partners. In this paper, we have investigated this claim and have demonstrated empirically both that Canada has had a tendency to free ride when it comes to international security commitments and that it has lost influence in the capital of its most important ally, the United States. Moreover, it would appear that during the Mulroney years, when Canada evinced a greater concern for pulling its own weight in its alliances, the Canadian government had noticeably more influence in Washington than we do today.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that Canada must make a serious effort to increase its security payoffs to its allies if wants to preserve both its sovereignty and independence, as well as its say over alliance-wide and bilateral defence and foreign policy issues. To do so, however, does not necessarily mean dramatically increased defence budgets. Instead, Canadians have a choice. If they want to continue purchasing security on the cheap, they can do so and retain influence only by providing Washington with significant policy sidepayments. In other words, Canada cannot continue to snub the Americans on issues like missile defence and foreign deployments, while keeping its defence spending down. Furthermore, the government will also have to cooperate extensively with the US on its most important priority, homeland defence, which will involve policy compromises to satisfy the Americans on border security and immigration policy. This is especially the case in the contemporary era of American insecurity after the terrorist attacks of 2001. In this more complex and threatening world, the Bush Administration has determined that the principle value of American allies is to close ranks and offer support. Free riding without providing policy support sidepayments is likely to be punished.

Alternatively, if Canadians want to retain their ability to opt out of American-led initiatives and foreign involvements, they can credibly do so only by paying for their policy independence by ending the free ride. They would have to increase national defence-spending to around 2 percent of national GDP (around the median within NATO) and increase bith the number and size of its overseas commitments. Doing so would allow Canada the right to be taken seriously by the US, and by improving the country's image with other NATO members, would also allow it to pursue independently of the US with the middle and smaller powers of Western Europe. Of course, even with a somewhat increased commitment to international

security, we believe that it is still useful to cooperate closely with Washington on national security and defence policy matters, and retain our right to disagree primarily on those few matters where Canadian interests or values diverge widely from American ones.