

“Mr Harper’s Foreign Policy: the good, the bad and the ugly” (2006–2015)

**Guest lecture by the Hon. Hugh Segal
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OVERVIEW: Structure

1. Roots of the Harper Policy
2. Previous Norm
3. Key Elements
4. Pros and Cons of Harper government approach



The Politics of Foreign Policy

- ▶ Conscription: both world wars
- ▶ Mr Pearson's Nobel Prize (1956)
- ▶ The Bomarc Missile Crisis (Pearson, Diefenbaker)
"Cold Fire–Kennedy's Northern Front" John Boyco
(Alfred Knopf–March 2016)
- ▶ Pearson:63–68/ Columbia River Treaty, AUTO
Pact, Cyprus deployment, Opposition to Vietnam
War

The Foreign Policy of the Harper Government: 2006–2015

- ▶ The roots of the Policy framework:
- ▶ 13 years of Liberal policy perceived as: contradictory (opposed free trade then embraced)
- ▶ “COMPROMISED DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES TO APPEASE DICTATORS..”
- ▶ 2006 PLATFORM weak, support of Israel was variable, military strength reduced, Canada an unreliable Ally (the Iraq decision), few new trade agreements

Historical context >>>

- ▶ Liberal Foreign Policy reduced to “Team Canada” trade excursions (Conservative Bias)
- ▶ Allusions to Mackenzie King: “Conscription if necessary but not necessarily conscription” (world war II)
- ▶ Chrétien- “ Foreign Policy if necessary, but not necessarily foreign policy”

Impact on foreign policy of PC/Reform party split

- ▶ Party split reduced Conservatives to 2 seats in 1993 election (Campbell vs Chrétien, Manning and Bouchard)
- ▶ Liberals won easy majorities until 2006
- ▶ **Only common points between PCs and Reform:** Canada–US Free Trade, NAFTA, Market driven energy Policy (vs National Energy Plan); stronger national Defence, clearer support of NATO and Israel

Previous Foreign Policy Norms

- ▶ Theory of the “**Honest Broker**” from Pearson and Suez Crisis–Military Capacity at the time–Peace Keeping (1956–1984)
- ▶ **Strong Cold warrior** (Louis St Laurent–NATO,UN Charter, Cyprus, peacekeeping)
- ▶ **Trudeau** Cruise Missile Testing(1949–1979), Trudeau – Reagan disconnect
- ▶ **Mulroney**: Bosnia, Gulf War 1(liberation of Kuwait) Refurbish Canada–US Relations, Free Trade, end of the Soviet Union, support for theatre nuclear missiles in Europe—with Thatcher and Reagan),strong leadership on apartheid(opposing Thatcher and Reagan) Rio Summit (1992) joining OAS, creation of *la Francophonie*, close personal relationships with Thatcher,Reagan,George Bush(42)John Major, Bill Clinton

Key Harper Foreign Policy Elements

- ▶ Role of Values: rule of law, democracy, gender equality, loyalty to allies, no “going along to get along” – distaste for “moral equivalency arguments”, enhanced role of parliament in military deployments (take note debates vs actual votes)
- ▶ First Foreign Minister – Peter McKay, former leader of the pre-merger Progressive Conservatives; second FM John Baird (former Ontario Minister) – who chaired both of Harper’s Leadership Campaigns
- ▶ i.e.: Ambassador for Religious Freedom, More robust military procurement in support of Liberal commitment to Afghanistan, early restraint on China, Manley Task Force, the War in Libya (Liberal doctrine of responsibility to protect (R2P)) Break with Iran, Strong less equivocal support for Israel, Commonwealth Reform, support for Gay Rights in Africa, Reconciliation and end of impunity in Sri Lanka)
- ▶ CIDA reform
- ▶ Less Mulroney like engagement on Climate Change

Different instrumental choices on Trade

- ▶ **Canada Korea Free Trade agreement**
- ▶ **Canada–EU (negotiated, ratification pending)**
- ▶ **TPP (negotiated but ratification pending)**
- ▶ **Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection agreements** (China, Ivory Coast, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Romania, Senegal, Slovak Republic)
- ▶ **Free Trade agreements:** Honduras, Costa Rica, Jordan, Panama, European Free Trade association–Lichtenstein, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine

Pros and Cons:

- ▶ Key global blocks that preferred less precise foreign policy, distanced themselves (publicly): Islamic nations (Organization of Islamic Cooperation - 57 members)
- ▶ Those still under heavy Russian Influence: Shanghai Cooperation Council (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Russia)
- ▶ Making Security Council Victory hard without policy shift

Pros and Cons Continued

- ▶ Stepping out of Liberal International approach (Roland Paris) International Journal, September 2014)
- ▶ Too Much Leo Strauss, not enough Lester B Pearson (Starling, CIPS, May 2015) >> independent and enforced liberalism against the universal state
- ▶ Opposition of Professional striped pants set to military expression
- ▶ “Military aid over peacekeeping, unilateralism over teamwork, free trade over foreign aid” (Mackinnon, *Globe and Mail*, September 28, 2015)
- ▶ “Big Hat, No Cattle”

Pros and Cons Continued

- ▶ Gap between alleged militarism of Harper vs alleged “naïve Pacifism of Trudeau” more style than substance
- ▶ On Trade, NATO, Canada-US, Canada-EU, Canada China, Israel–no substantive change in policy
- ▶ **“Sunny Ways”**–being more optimistic and engaged, as opposed to pessimistic and guarded is a good point of departure

Q&A