

**Notes for a presentation**  
**by Paul Heinbecker**  
**on**  
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**How Are We Actually Doing?**  
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*Check Against Delivery*

# Buyer Beware: the Selling of the Harper Government's Foreign Policy

## Preface

In the alternative universe that is contemporary Ottawa,  
secrecy is accountability,  
subversion is reform,  
communications operations are policy,  
movement is action,  
convictions trump evidence  
and incompetence passes for effectiveness.

From the Fair Elections Act and Omnibus Bills to tough-on-crime legislation and  
Bill C-51,

the draft counter-terrorism legislation

from the long gun registry to the long form census,

from climate change to the stifling of scientists,

from Senate reform to a long list of exceptionally bad senior  
appointments,

reality is what the government and its acolytes say it is,

neither more nor less

George Orwell meets Lewis Carroll.

And so it is with foreign policy.

I am going to argue today that the Harper government talks a better foreign policy game than it plays.

And that in the interests of understanding the government's record, hyperbole and rhetorical exaggeration need to be separated from performance and reality. .

In order to eliminate any appearance of political partisanship,

and because I am comparatively familiar with the Mulroney foreign policy,

especially the latter part,

I will try to set the Harper government's foreign policy in context,

by comparing its policies and accomplishments with the policies and accomplishments of previous Governments of Canada,

in particular the (Progressive) Conservative government of Prime Minister Mulroney

whom I advised on foreign policy .

With the Harper and Mulroney governments each having had about nine years in office, it is reasonably fair and illuminating to contrast their performances.

The times have changed in the interim but not so much as to render such comparisons invalid.

### Introduction

The first draft of the foreign policy chapter of the history of the Harper government is currently being written

—by the Harper government,

and by its acolytes in the media and academe.

The Ottawa communications machine is spinning hard in the contest for Canadian hearts and minds

-- and votes.

With one eye on its legacy and the other eye on re-election,

i.e., with the importance to electoral success of projecting the perception of “leadership”

the “machine” is selling a story of international statesmanship,

of much needed clarity of purpose and strength of character.

After years of moral drift and political fecklessness,

so the story goes,

Canada's foreign policy compass has been firmly set to a North Star of leadership and straight talking,

Of principle and purpose,

All bolstered by enhanced military capacity,

complete with evocations of our too little celebrated martial past,

and all paid for by economic action plans and increased trade.

Before repetition renders this spin into "fact",

it is informative to examine what the Harper government has actually accomplished internationally

### **Personal Diplomacy**

On major international issues, foreign policy is the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

He (usually he) deals with his counterparts abroad and makes the defining policy decisions.

The foreign policy successes are the Prime Minister's successes and the failures are the Prime Minister's failures.

The foreign minister supports the Prime Minister

by providing advice,

by seeing to the execution of the Prime Minister's decisions

and by handling those issues that the Prime minister has neither the time nor the inclination to do personally.

So, in that light how is the Prime Minister actually doing?

Bilateral cooperation is forged and agreements are reached through high level, summit visits.

The frequency of such visits is, therefore, a pretty reliable indicator of the state and intensity of the relationship.

In Brian Mulroney's nine years in office, American Presidents visited Canada eight times

(In Jean Chrétien's tenure, American presidents visited Canada seven times).

Since Stephen Harper assumed office, there have been three visits of American presidents to Canada,

one by President George W. Bush,

and two by President Obama.

Personal diplomacy between leaders matters.

A Canadian Prime Minister cannot afford *not* to get along with his American counterpart if he wants the attention of the President rather than of the bureaucracy to Canadian issues.

He should want that because policy advances are rarely made and political deadlocks are rarely broken by sub-political rank officials.

In Washington, the job of these officials is primarily technical, not political,

It is to defend existing positions, not to free-lance on new ones,

You want your issue on the President's desk,  
not the Deputy Assistant Secretary's desk,

And for that you need a personal relationship,  
Or at least frequent and direct inter-actions.

But personal diplomacy does not appear to be a priority for Harper or for President Obama.

It is not a secret that neither is a favorite of the other.

In a 2012 Time magazine interview Obama listed German Chancellor Merkel, then Indian Prime Minister Singh, Singapore President Lee, then Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and UK Prime Minister Cameron as close contacts.

Mr. Harper was conspicuous by his absence from the list.

Further, the imperatives of personal diplomacy extend as well to the Congress.

PM Mulroney, for his part, was a student of the Congress.

He spoke to a joint session of Congress in 1988, taking Canada's case on acid rain and free trade directly and publically to US legislators.

PM Harper has never spoken to a joint session of the US Congress.

Since Mr. Harper came to office in February 2006, many of his foreign counterparts have found it worthwhile to speak to Congress,

including prime Ministers Olmert and Netanyahu of Israel,  
King Abdullah of Jordan,  
President Sarkozy of France,  
Chancellor Merkel of Germany,  
Prime Minister Cameron of the UK,  
President Calderon of Mexico,  
Prime Minister Gillard of Australia,



Presidents Lee and Park of Korea  
and President Poroshenko of Ukraine.

Mr. Harper is again conspicuous by his absence.

Nor was Mulroney's personal diplomacy restricted to Washington.

In Mulroney's day, Ottawa was a player on major global issues;

For example, when I was ambassador in Germany, then Chancellor Kohl gave a speech in which he thanked three foreign leaders for making German unification possible—

George H. W. Bush, Mikael Gorbachev and Brian Mulroney.

Mulroney, because he helped persuade Margaret Thatcher and François Mitterrand and others to drop their opposition to German unification.

In Mulroney's time in office, the lampposts on the ceremonial route in Ottawa frequently flew the flags of visiting leaders.

These days the sight of foreign flags is rare.

The world is not beating a path to the door of 24 Sussex Drive.

Nor is the world being invited.

**On personal diplomacy, advantage Mulroney**

**Canada-US Relations:**

Productive relations with the United States, still the world's only full service superpower, is job one for every Canadian government.

How effective are the Harper government's relations with Washington?

On assuming office, the Harper government made the Keystone XL pipeline its highest bilateral priority,

and predicted quick US approval

(what Prime Minister Harper infamously called a "no brainer").

But Ottawa's inability to connect the dots between its own intransigence on climate change

and its desire to export bitumen through the Keystone XL pipeline

has given President Obama few grounds for overriding environmental opposition in the US to the pipeline.

Ottawa has preferred public relations and advertising campaigns to the more difficult and more politically costly

work of modernizing oil and gas regulation,

and/or putting a price on the emission of carbon into the atmosphere through a carbon tax or a cap-and-trade system

none of which appeals to a disbelieving Conservative Party base,  
or to its leader.

Further, the petulance evident on the Canadian side on Keystone XL is rarely profitable for the smaller partner,  
and never a substitute for statecraft, personal diplomacy, strategy and policy traffic management,  
all of which are rare in today's Ottawa.

And so nine years on, the government and Canadians are still waiting on Keystone XL.

In Mulroney's day, US-generated acid rain was destroying eastern Canadian lakes and forests.

Mulroney could have waited for Reagan to act,

But instead he took some tough policy decisions on acid rain, especially as regards the INCO plant in Sudbury and coal-fired power plants in Toronto,

He reached agreements with producing provinces to cut polluting emissions by half

and went to the Americans with a clean hands campaign,

in order to shame the Reagan and Bush administrations into acting.

He ultimately succeeded and wrung an acid rain prevention agreement out of Washington.

After 9/11, Canada-US trade and tourism were collateral damage to the attacks on New York and Washington.

The damage caused by “thickening” of the border post-9/11 continues.

For example, the Harper government’s inability to negotiate an exemption from the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative,

which requires Canadians (and Americans) entering the US from Canada to have a passport or a Nexus pass

has cost several billion dollars in lost trans-border travel revenues.

This is not to say that the Harper government record vis-a-vis Washington is all negative.

In its nine years in office, the Harper government has made worthwhile advances on easing trade-limiting regulations and harmonizing standards,

through the joint Regulatory Cooperation Council.

It has also made some progress on shared perimeter security, notably Nexus enrollment, cargo pre-inspection at Blaine, and joint “Shiprider” policing.

And Ottawa has almost persuaded the Americans to let us pay for a second Windsor-Detroit bridge and US Customs facility.

But beyond that, the Harper government has not taken bilateral relations very far.

There is little contact and less warmth.

In its nine years in office, the Mulroney government negotiated

the landmark and transformative Free Trade Agreement,

the NAFTA agreement

and the Acid Rain agreement,

renewed the Great lakes Water quality Agreement

and reached an accord with Washington on American ship passage through the Arctic.

**So, on managing Canada's interests vis-a-vis the USA, Advantage Mulroney, hands down.**

### **Mexico**

Mexico is our third largest trading partner.

It is also the US's third trading partner,  
and is closing the gap on us.

The Hispanic population of the US dwarfs the Canadian expatriates and is correspondingly more powerful politically

About a million and a half Canadians live in or visit Mexico each year.

And 250 thousand Mexicans visit Canada annually.

Or they did,

until Ottawa imposed a visa requirement on Mexicans that effectively cut tourism in half,

at a cumulative cost to the Canadian economy approaching a billion dollars.

The visa requirement and the incompetent way it was implemented alienated our third biggest trading partner.

The requirement was imposed almost literally from one day to the next

- on the eve of a bilateral meeting between foreign ministers and with a trilateral summit looming,

- with little provision being made to permit our missions abroad to actually issue the visas in a timely way.

There has been progress at the margins since but the heart of the visa problem remains unsolved.

To make matters worse, Prime Minister Harper inexplicably reneged on a promise to resolve the issue whose roots he himself said were in Canada.

According to a report of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives

"Canada's imposition of a 'temporary' visa ... is perceived as an insult to Mexican leaders and has chilled relations with Canada,"

Ottawa's bungling of this file led the Mexican president to cancel his visit to Canada last year.

The Mulroney government had constructive relations with Mexico City, among other things welcoming Mexico into NAFTA,

**On managing relations with Mexico, advantage Mulroney.**

### NAFTA

The Mulroney government negotiated NAFTA and the Chrétien government ratified it.

Most observers acknowledge that NAFTA is largely responsible for generating a much larger bilateral economic relationship with Mexico than had previously existed.

Little has been done to improve NAFTA, however, in the more than 20 years of its existence.

For example, some of the advances negotiated in CETA,

notably on state/province and municipal spending programs  
and some of the advances we have made bilaterally with the US  
notably on the aligning regulations  
could be incorporated into NAFTA

But the Harper government is actually going backwards on the NAFTA file.

Ottawa called off the trilateral summit scheduled for Canada this month



lest the tensions between Harper and the other leaders vitiate the impression of statesmanship

that the Harper government wishes to project in an election year.

### **On NAFTA, advantage Mulroney**

#### **Trade Policy**

The Harper government's chief accomplishments have been economic:

the Comprehensive Trade and Economic Agreement (CETA) with the European Union (the EU),

the free trade agreement with Korea

-- Canada's first ever with an Asian country --

a number of less consequential but still beneficial trade and investment agreements with other, smaller partners, and,

after an initial misjudgment of Canada's interest,

a seat at the potentially important Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations table.

The negotiation of CETA is a signal achievement by the Harper government,

one that previous governments, notably the government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau,

had long sought but had no success in delivering.

CETA promises significant advances for Canadian exporters, notably in improving access to the procurement of goods and services of European governments

—at the national, state and municipal levels of government—

and in facilitating investment, all reciprocally.

It also foresees exemptions for the expression and promotion of cultural diversity.

Overall, CETA should help diversify somewhat Canada's export markets which

for reasons of geographic proximity and cultural propinquity have long been axed on, and

in the eyes of many,

also too dependent on

the US economy

CETA is a worthwhile outcome given Washington's policy vicissitudes and political dysfunctions.

Does that make CETA "...the biggest deal Canada has ever made" (Conservative Party of Canada website)

or even "Canada's most ambitious trade initiative" ever (DFATD website)?

Hardly.

The meaningful yardstick is not the breadth of the issues an agreement covers or their novelty

or even how many countries sign it,

but how many dollars in trade and investment those signatures can generate.

In 1988, when the Canada-US Free trade Agreement (FTA) came into effect, Canada was exporting about \$100 billion to the US annually.

That is three times the \$35 billion (Statistics Canada) that Canada is exporting to the EU now

(actually 2013, the most recent year for which data are available, and the year CETA was first signed by the Harper government).

Over the years since 1988, the level of Canadian exports to the US has grown to \$360 billion,

or 10 times the current level of Canadian exports to Europe.

Similarly, the stock of Canadian investment in its NAFTA partners,

and US and Mexican investment in Canada

is \$820 billion,

almost double the \$425 billion invested in Canada by the EU.

CETA is undoubtedly a worthwhile achievement but NAFTA's value to Canada dwarfs CETA's.

It is hyperbole at best and disingenuous or dishonest at worst to argue otherwise.

Mulroney, for his part, concluded first the FTA and then the NAFTA agreements.

The Canada-US Free Trade Agreement was so politically contentious that an election had to be fought over it.

The CETA scarcely registers in Canadian public opinion,

the political heavy lifting on trade having been done by Mulroney 25 years earlier.

Moreover, if the European Union decides that each of its national parliaments must ratify the agreement,

as the Germans want,

CETA will not come fully into effect for several years to come.

The Mulroney government was also influential in the progress made on trade liberalization in the last successful round of multilateral trade negotiations, the Uruguay Round.

This Round spanned the Mulroney years and was concluded early in Prime Minister Chretien's tenure.

Membership in the very exclusive "Quad" group

(the trade ministers from the US, the EU, Japan and Canada)

gave Canada a seat at the world's most important and most exclusive trade table,

affording Ottawa exceptional opportunities to defend and advance its economic and political interests.

Through the "Quad", and other such "clubs",

Canada had a disproportionate influence on the crucial negotiations that created the World Trade Organization

and that wrote the trade rules of the road that still apply

and that underpin bilateral and regional trade agreements, including the CETA.

The Quad” met 16 times during Mulroney’s years in office, five times in Canada.

[[When di the quad die]]

**On trade policy, advantage Mulroney**

### **China and Asia**

The Harper government’s relationship with China has been up and down,,

but the trend line is up.

The government has seemed to vacillate between wanting closer economic relations and maintaining an ideological distance.

For example, the Prime Minister skipped the Beijing Olympics.

He also initially canceled,

then reinstated,

participation last fall in the 2014 APEC summit in Beijing chaired by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

It will not come as news in this part of Canada that because of the sheer size and unparalleled growth rate of Asian economies,

Improvements in Canadian prosperity depend significantly on increasing our share of their markets.

Trade with China is growing in absolute terms, and China has become our second largest trade and economic partner.

But our relative share of Chinese trade is shrinking.

Our major trading partners export more of their production to emerging markets than we do,

Australia five times more.

The Harper government has been playing catch-up.

Prime Minister Harper himself has now paid three visits to China, and his ministers, especially Trade Minister Fast, have visited often.

The two sides have established a web of official relationships.

With India, the Harper government has strongly promoted cooperation, including bilateral summits.

This expanding bilateral relationship is supported by a wide range of agreements

The Mulroney government's relations with Asia were less intense.

Japan,

which had not yet experienced its decades long economic slowdown,  
was the clear priority for Mulroney.

Policy on China was essentially a continuation of policy carried out by Prime Minister Trudeau.

China's importance was growing then but the repression of student dissidents in Tiananmen Square in 1989 by the Communist authorities,  
effectively put contacts on ice.

Thereafter, high level relations were confined to Hong Kong.

Relations with India were good, especially in the fight against *Apartheid*, but the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi set them back considerably.

**On managing relations with China and Asia generally, Advantage Harper.**

**The Middle East: Israel, Palestine , Syria and ISIS.**

The clearest policy change the Harper government has made since coming to office has been the elevation of Israel and the relegation of Palestine.

It is also the policy on which the gap between the government's rhetoric and reality is the greatest.



While the Harper government quietly,  
some would say surreptitiously,

has maintained most of the basics of Canadian policy, as per the Foreign  
Affairs Department's website,

notably support for the two state solution,

it has changed the tone, style and fulcrum point of bilateral relations,

making it very clear that it is

and wishes to be seen as

utterly pro-Israel,

indeed an ally.

In the Prime Minister's words,

"Canada stands side-by-side with the State of Israel,  
our friend and ally in the democratic family of nations....

those who threaten Israel also threaten Canada".

More hyperbole.

In fact, while successive Canadian governments have been friendly and supportive of Israel,

especially of its right to exist in peace and security,

legally there is no formal alliance.

What the Harper government has presented as a principled foreign policy, and what its acolytes have portrayed as moral clarity,

others have seen as willful blindness regarding Israel,

reckless disregard for the Palestinians,

and indifference to the consequences for Canada.

The Harper government has largely been silent on Israeli actions,

including the transfer of 550,000 Jewish settlers into the West Bank

the on-going building of illegal settlements on Palestinian land,

the appropriation and demolition of Palestinian homes in Jerusalem and the West Bank,

the location of the security barrier inside Palestinian territory,

and the siege of Gaza,

for all of which there is a prima facie case that Israel is violating the Geneva Conventions that Canada has signed and ratified.

In his nine years in office, PM Harper has refrained from criticizing Israeli military tactics

even when Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem and other Israeli human rights organizations documented apparent Israeli violations of international law.

In the 2014 Israeli conflict with Hamas,

the Harper government pre-emptively exculpated Israel altogether by blaming the conflict and all the destruction it entailed exclusively on Hamas.

The Prime Minister and his foreign minister had no apparent qualms about Israel's extensive bombing and shelling of one of the most densely populated places on earth,

where extensive and disproportionate casualties among the innocent were entirely to be expected,

a tactic prohibited by the Geneva conventions and one that would not be used by the Canadian forces.

The Palestinians can be forgiven for finding it difficult to reconcile the behavior of the Canadian government

with the commitment Mr. Baird claimed on leaving office to “freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law”

The Harper government vehemently opposed the UN’s recognition of Palestine as a non-member observer state,

going so far as to send Foreign minister Baird to New York to state the Canadian position personally.

Only nine states, including Canada, the US and Israel and a few small Pacific island statelets,

representing about 5 percent of the UN membership and 5 percent of the world’s population,

albeit 25% of the UN budget,

opposed such recognition.

Ottawa also vehemently opposed Palestinian membership in the International Criminal Court,

an initiative that looks more like an aversion to justice than a devotion to principle.

Mulroney’s relationship with Israel was not intense,

and he never visited Israel while in office

As he told then Prime Minister Perez on a visit to Canada,

“Canadian policy is based on the recognition of Israel behind secure borders, together with a just solution for the Palestinians.”

He embraced the core of the Middle East policies of successive Canadian governments since 1947,

when Lester Pearson helped draft United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 creating the state of Israel.

Through the subsequent decades,

Canadian policy has been widely regarded as fair-minded and principled,

not even-handed as between terrorism and democracy,

as suggested by the Harper government,

nor unprincipled..

On the Middle East, **advantage Mulroney.**

### **Global Governance and Multilateral Cooperation**

The Harper government’s attitude to the UN has ranged between indifference and disdain,

at least until it latterly realized the value of the iconic marble dais in the General Assembly

for communicating subliminal messages about “leadership”

to the people back home.

That disparaging mindset,

together with the Harper government’s renunciation of its obligations on climate change,

its Israel-can-do-no-wrong approach to the Israeli-Palestinian issue,

its bungling of relations with the Arab Gulf countries on Air Canada’s behalf,

at a cost reportedly in the hundreds of millions of dollars to vacate and replace Camp Mirage in the UAE

and the incompetent way it scaled back Canada’s development cooperation with Africa

(more advertised than actual)—

the African ambassadors allegedly read about it in the newspaper--

caused Canada to lose a Security Council election,

ending a chain of six straight wins over six decades.

Subsequently the Harper government literally went out of its way to express its contempt for the UN.

In a speech to a charitable fund-raising dinner down the street from the UN,

the Prime Minister asserted that his government would not try to

“court every dictator with a vote at the United Nations

or just go along with every emerging international consensus,

no matter how self-evidently wrong-headed.”

Actually, according to Freedom House, about two-thirds of the 194 UN member countries are electoral democracies, up from 41 % in 1989

When not actually snubbing the General Debate,

Prime Minister Harper and Foreign Minister Baird tended to lecture the near empty Assembly chamber on the superiority of Canadian principles.

In delivering the Canadian statement in the 2011 UN General Debate, Foreign Minister Baird asserted that

“standing for what is principled and just, regardless of whether it is popular or convenient or expedient “

...is the Canadian tradition.”

Canada “will not go along”, he said, in order “to get along”.

In the Israeli Knesset earlier this year,

the Prime Minister voiced the same sentiment when he asserted that

it is “a Canadian tradition to stand for what is principled and just,  
regardless of whether it is convenient or popular. “

Wouldn't such compliments be considerably more satisfying if third parties paid them to us,

instead of our having to pay them to ourselves.)

The implication of this political hyperbole is that Canada is exceptionally, perhaps even uniquely principled in its foreign policy.

Ottawa has dug a particularly deep hole on climate change.

We renounced Kyoto,

insisted we would only reduce our emissions if others did likewise (even though we are a major emitter),

cut contributions to international financing,

failed to meet our commitments at home,

and actually obstructed negotiations abroad.

Small wonder we are regarded as pariahs on this file.



On the other hand, the Harper government participated actively in the G7, the G20 and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) responses to the financial crisis of 2007.

The Harper government also made full use of the G8 and G20 summits in Toronto to advocate austerity and the elimination of deficits.

[Ironically that policy prescription, opposed by the Obama administration, was responsible for years of slow growth and painful unemployment, especially in Europe,

and has since been rejected by even the IMF. ]

The Harper government also spent about \$860 million on the Toronto and Muskoka G20/G8 summits, the most expensive such gatherings ever held anywhere.

Security officers arrested approximately 900 people in G20-related incidents, the largest mass arrests in Canadian history.

Prime Minister Mulroney saw it as in Canada's interest to work to make the multilateral system function better.

In his own words, he believed that "a strong UN enhanced Canada's position in the world and greatly benefited the world community" (Memoirs, p 896).

The Mulroney government led the UN-wide response to the Ethiopian famine in 1985, saving scores of thousands of lives

according to Brian Stewart,  
the CBC correspondent whose reporting touched the conscience of  
humanity.

Mulroney personally chaired the first international climate conference, in Toronto in 1988,

In 1989 Canada was elected to the UN Security Council (1990-91).

PM Mulroney also conducted the successful campaign at the UN and in the Commonwealth against Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan on the sanctioning of Apartheid South Africa

(Nelson Mandela visited Ottawa within six months of his release from Robben Island prison to express his appreciation)

Mulroney also co-chaired the UN conference in 1991 that gave birth to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In 1991, Mulroney was approached by the UK, US, Russia and France to stand for the office of UN Secretary General to succeed Javier Perez de Cuellar;

he declined because of on-going domestic constitutional reform obligations deriving from the Charlottetown Accord process.

In 1991, he exercised important leadership at the UN-sponsored Rio Earth Summit,

where Canada was the first nation to sign the Biological Diversity Convention.

In Mulroney's time, Canada participated in every UN peace-keeping mission.

Mulroney was also a strong supporter of NATO, although he disappointed allies in Europe when he closed Canada's sole military base in Europe in response to the diminishing Soviet threat and the 1992-3 global recession.

He was the first leader,

well before the idea gained currency,  
to call for the expansion of NATO eastwards  
and to suggest a functional partnership with Russia.

He was also the first G7 leader to recognize Ukraine as an independent country

Like his successor, Jean Chrétien, Mulroney made full use of G7 summits to develop close personal relations with his counterparts.

Mulroney also used the Francophonie

and his personal relationship with President Mitterrand,

to ensure that France and others stayed respectfully on the sidelines during the Charlottetown Accord referendum,

a policy repeated by Prime Minister Chrétien subsequently with President Chirac.

Further, Mulroney initiated Canadian membership in the Organization of American States,

after years of Canadian indifference to Latin America.

**On global governance and multilateral cooperation: advantage Mulroney.  
Hands down.**

### **The Instruments of Foreign Policy**

#### *Development Assistance*

The overall development budget has regressed in the past five years from 0.34% to 0.24% of GDP.

Contributions to multilateral institutions, UNICEF, UNDP and the International Financial Institutions have all dropped.

CIDA's "responsive program" which funded initiatives from Canadian NGOs, universities and professional organizations has effectively been stopped

Budget cuts have had the effect of imposing an advocacy chill on Canadian civil society working abroad.

The Canadian Revenue Agency has reportedly targeted organizations whose activities it regards as too political, including environmental, development and human rights organizations.

The Harper government has adjusted and readjusted the countries of focus of development cooperation funds

It has latterly favoured middle income developing countries, especially those in Latin America where Canadian industry,

particularly the mining industry,

is engaged.

The jury is still out on whether these partnerships with Canadian business will serve the development interest of the recipient countries or the business interests of Canada or hopefully both.

The jury is out also on the effectiveness of another Harper government initiative, the amalgamation of the former Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Foreign Affairs and Trade Department.

The “signature” Harper government development assistance program,

emanating from the G8 summit in 2010,

is the Muskoka Initiative”,

\$1.1 billion dollars in funding for maternal, newborn and child health in developing countries.

In 2010, Prime Minister Harper was invited to co-chair a new UN commission on accountability and transparency

to monitor the progress of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's health, a \$40 billion program launched by the UN.

In 2014, Prime Minister Harper pledged an additional \$3.5 billion over five years for the Muskoka initiative.

Regrettably, the initiative skirts the issues of contraception and abortion, and thereby one of the biggest women's and children's health problems.

Contraception has been estimated to avert 187 million unintended pregnancies per year

and consequently to avert millions of abortions

and millions more of deaths of mothers in childbirth or back-street abortion clinics.

For his part, Foreign Minister John Baird has been a resolute opponent of forced and childhood marriage

and a strong advocate for LGBT rights

and against institutionalized homophobia.

Former Immigration and now National Defence Minister Jason Kenney has strongly supported protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination in other countries and granting them asylum in Canada.

During Mulroney's tenure, Canada's development assistance budget was double the Harper government development budget as a percentage of national income, 0.46 versus 0.24.

### *Defence*

On defence, the Harper government has a respectable record in practice, albeit less than the rhetoric suggests.

It rewrote Canada's defence policy and acquired substantial amounts of equipment needed by the Canadian forces in Afghanistan

It also ambitiously promised major equipment purchases for all three branches of our forces,

notably the F-35 fighter aircraft,

joint support ships,

Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships

search and rescue aircraft,

etc.

The procurement programs proved more difficult, costly and time consuming than anticipated,

and Ottawa has subsequently geared back sharply on spending.

In fact, the percentage of GDP spent on defence has fallen back to around just one percent, the lowest level, according to military historian Jack Granatstein, since the 1930s.

Nevertheless, the Harper government continued the commitment to Afghanistan of the Liberal government, deploying about 3,000 troops there.

The Harper government also contributed six Canadian F-18s to NATO's UN-mandated air campaign in Libya, led by a Canadian general.

In the war against the "Islamic State" and other terrorists in Iraq and Syria, Ottawa committed 9 aircraft, supporting troops and a number of special forces to a limited engagement.

On Ukraine, Canada has supplied aircraft to NATO efforts to reassure Eastern European Alliance members feeling threatened by President Vladimir Putin's aggressive, regressive behavior in Ukraine.

Canada has also committed itself to supply Ukraine non-lethal and financial aid

Regrettably, in Iraq and Ukraine, the Harper government spin machine and its acolytes' overheated the rhetoric,

making exaggerated leadership claims for Harper,

e.g., "... a lone hawk circling high above the chirping sparrows" (iPolitics March , 2014, Burney and Hampson).



In reality, in Ukraine, Western diplomacy is being led by Germany, and France,  
not by Canada.

And the big military stick is carried by the US.

Belligerent rhetoric coming from Canada,  
the NATO country furthest removed from Ukraine,  
one with comparatively modest military capability,  
and perhaps the smallest economic stake in Russia,  
was resented by allies as political grandstanding.

Leadership on this and other cases of war and peace goes to the countries with  
the big battalions,  
i.e., not Canada.

It is surprising and naïve to think it could be otherwise.

In terms of contributions to UN military/peacekeeping operations, Canada  
currently ranks 68th among troop and police contributors.

During PM Mulroney's tenure, Canada ranked third in troop contributions  
Canada participated in every UN peace-keeping mission, including Bosnia.

When Mulroney left office in 1993, Canada was spending 1.8 percent of its GDP on defence,

nearly double the expenditure of the Harper government after its nine years in office (World Bank statistics).

Canadian air and naval forces participated in the combat of the 1990-91 UN-sanctioned Gulf war that drove Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Canadian forces also participated in the UN peace operations in Bosnia.

The Mulroney government maintained a brigade of combat forces in Germany as part of our commitment to European security until the government's worsening fiscal situation caused by the recession of the early 1990's forced its withdrawal.

Canadian diplomacy has been under siege since Prime Minister Harper came to office.

**PH to fill in**

**On investment in the instruments of Canadian foreign policy, advantage Mulroney**