

January 1985

Book Review

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Recommended Citation

Mark Meirowitz, *Book Review*, 9 Can.-U.S. L.J. 137 (1985)

Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/cuslj/vol9/iss/7>

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Book Review

Erratum

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Book Review

Canadian-American Relations: The Promise and the Challenge. Kenneth M. Curtis and John E. Carroll. Lexington, Mass. and Toronto: Lexington Books, 1983. Pp. 100.

Canada and the United States share a vast number of common interests and common concerns. Over the last few years the relationship between these two countries has been strained. In *Canadian-American Relations: The Promise and the Challenge*, Kenneth M. Curtis, former Governor of Maine, and John E. Carroll, an Associate Professor of Environmental Conservation at the University of New Hampshire, survey the many areas in which Canada and the United States interrelate and suggest ways in which the U.S.-Canadian relationship can be improved. The authors state that Americans have taken Canada for granted and that the bilateral relationship between the United States and Canada is in a state of deterioration.

The authors discuss the various aspects of the relationship between the United States and Canada. With respect to bilateral relations, they emphasize that on both the public and private level, Canadians and Americans have been addressing their common problems. In the bilateral sphere, however, it is the view of Governor Curtis and Professor Carroll that Canada has devoted much more interest and energy to its relationship with the United States than the United States has with respect to Canada, noting the "relatively unimportant position Canada commands in Washington." Indeed, the United States often fails to consult Canada before going forth with policy initiatives which would be of great interest to Canada and other members of the Western Alliance.

To illustrate an area of conflict, the authors discuss important trans-boundary environmental issues, of which the acid rain issue is "a giant." This issue will likely have a long-term impact on the relationship between the United States and Canada. The Reagan-Mulroney summit in March, 1985 may have augured the solution to the acid rain problem. Former Ontario Premier William Davis and former U.S. Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis were appointed to be special acid rain envoys charged with overseeing negotiations and reporting back to their respective governments in 1986. As with many other issues concerning the United States and Canada, lack of interest (principally among the American

populace) in the acid rain issue has prevented its ascension to the top of the U.S. foreign policy agenda.

The authors emphasize the importance of the extent of nongovernmental and private relationships that exist between the peoples of the United States and Canada. As the authors put it, "no two nations have experienced the level of cultural and economic integration achieved by the Canadian and American peoples along a long and diversified border." Despite this, most Americans do not know the fundamentals of Canadian geography or the names of Canada's leaders.

The authors conclude that good U.S.-Canadian relations depend ultimately on American knowledge and understanding of Canada, and that Canadians must recognize the enormous benefits to their society that are linked with the economic and cultural relationship to their giant neighbor. If, say the authors, Canadians find aspects of the U.S. world role distasteful, then they should realize that they, more than any other nation, can influence that role.

The authors, in order to improve the U.S.-Canadian relationship, propose a New Canada Policy which would be designed to avoid future conflicts, maintain good relations and keep options open for future collaboration. The purpose of the new policy would be to eliminate what the authors see as America's uncoordinated ad hoc approach to U.S.-Canadian relations. The authors recommend that the following two precepts be adopted:

That the new program of conduct in U.S.-Canadian relations be formal and institutional in nature; that it be governed by clear rules of procedure; that these rules be incorporated ultimately into a new set of agreements and treaties, and that Washington's New Canada Policy clearly call for such; and that, granted the uniqueness and enormity of the scope of the U.S.-Canadian nongovernmental or private sector relationship, that sufficient and diverse representation of the private sector be encouraged in every way possible, such representation to include, but not be limited to, leaders of business and industry, finance, labor, citizens' organizations, and academia, provided that such private citizens have clear expertise in U.S.-Canadian relations (and, in the case of Americans, clear knowledge of Canada and matters Canadian); (p. 96-97) . . . [and t]hat encouragement and support be given to subnational government, and particularly to U.S. state governments, to develop Canadian expertise so that matters more properly in the domain of state and provincial government can be managed and differences resolved at that level, and so that the future relationship can be strengthened at something more akin to a grass-roots level. (p. 97)

In the bilateral arena, the authors suggest the establishment of the U.S.-Canadian Joint Economic Commission with sufficient staff empowered to draw upon the expertise of technical personnel within specialized departments of both governments. This Commission would be charged with the responsibility of maintaining a current perspective on all aspects

of the economic relationship, predicting future problem areas, and making balanced action recommendations to both governments. In the area of maritime, fishery and energy disputes, the authors recommend the establishment of a Sea and Shore Boundaries and Resources Commission to carry out for the marine environment what the International Joint Commission has accomplished for the inland fresh water environment and to insure the fair adjudication of boundary sovereignty disputes. The authors also suggest that the International Joint Commission be strengthened.

The authors also recommend that the states of the United States which border on Canada be encouraged to develop good relations with Canadian provinces (the book contains an excellent discussion of efforts toward that end undertaken by Governor Curtis when he was governor of Maine). In addition, good relations between the United States and Canada can also be enhanced by nongovernmental activities. For example, the continued expansion of U.S.-Canadian studies programs in U.S. universities would be an important vehicle by which the U.S. academic community could become involved in long-term growth of awareness of Canadian issues. Further, the U.S. news media should act to increase Canadian coverage in the United States, which would contribute to greater American consciousness of the Canadian perspective.

There have, of course, been problem areas such as the Foreign Investment Review Act and the National Energy Program, policies which have in the past been responsible for strains in U.S.-Canadian relations. Much of this damage has, however, been repaired by the Mulroney government in the promulgation of its Investment Canada proposal and the adoption of the Western Accord. Following through on a campaign promise and in a major departure from the policy of the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian Progressive Conservative Government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney proposed legislation to the Canadian Parliament in December 1984 which will bring about a major revision of Canada's foreign investment rules now encompassed in the Foreign Investment Review Act and administered by the Canadian Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA). Under the proposal, the Foreign Investment Review Act would be repealed and be replaced by the Investment Canada Act and a new agency called Investment Canada would replace FIRA and be given a mandate to encourage investment in Canada. With respect to Canadian energy policy, the government of Brian Mulroney has, through the Western Accord, virtually abolished the National Energy Program enacted under Trudeau.

The bottom line is that Americans must recognize and accept Canada's perception of its global role. As the authors state it, "Canada is clearly not the 51st American state nor is Canada an ally that follows Washington's lead mindlessly and commits to American positions automatically." While Canada's world view is different from that of the United States, the authors suggest that this factor can be used to

America's advantage. Canada, since it enjoys good relations with nations unfriendly to the United States, could act as a go-between and "alternate window on the world" from the United States. In doing so, Canada could help to secure world peace. Furthermore, Canada's special relationships with the vast French speaking world could be of great use to the United States.

Canada and the United States have a unique relationship. There may be intermittent misunderstandings but these have never risen to the level of outright conflict. Even difficult issues concerning, for example, trucking, softwood lumber and the treatment of Canada as a reciprocal nation under the U.S. Mineral Lands Leasing Act were handled effectively by the U.S. Administration, and in each case action was taken in favor of Canada. It is true that in the U.S. Congress there have been discussions about taking action against Canada (for example, in the case of legislation introduced to prevent the acquisition by Canadians of U.S. mineral resources companies). These bills have not, however, come to fruition. The relationship between the United States and Canada is actually one of great respect and concern for one another's needs. The private and public interactions documented by this book underscore this point repeatedly.

This book is a very useful overview of the U.S.-Canadian relationship and should be read by anyone who is interested in improving relations between our two countries.

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