

void or chasm of unknown dimensions and perils.

Globalization and Canadian foreign policy

Within the discursive context giving meaning to globalization, it is unsurprising that Jean Chrétien first came to office in 1993 having made few explicit promises with respect to international trade or foreign economic policy. Beyond the vague promise to renegotiate aspects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Liberal Party's election platform *Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada* (the Red Book) limited its commitments to assisting Canadian firms to become more aggressive traders: "More Canadian businesses *must* become exporters, and government *must* help them develop the knowledge and skills to make that possible."²¹ To that end, the Red Book committed the Liberal government to enhancing the ability of the Trade Commissioner Service of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to identify export and investment opportunities for Canadian firms.

The first indication that the climate for foreign economic policy making had changed since the highly politicized 1988 'free trade' election was foreshadowed in the 1993 election campaign. Despite earlier commitments to scrap NAFTA, the Liberal party had become less sanguine about the prospect of rejecting out of hand continental trade agreements, and Chrétien chose instead to campaign on the need to make changes to the Agreement. Doern and Tomlin argue that this was in part possible given that, contrary to the 1988 campaign, the intensity surrounding the issue of continental trade agreements had diminished. "NAFTA was presented as the 'FTA plus Mexico', simply a fine-tuning of the FTA. As a result, NAFTA generated less emotion... than did the FTA."²² Contrary to the FTA, which had been the subject of real political debate contrasting very different visions of Canada and its national destiny, NAFTA was presented as a 'technical' response to globalization and the extension of regional