

The *Options* paper was unusual in that it focused squarely on the dominant question in our foreign policy: how to limit the impact of the U.S. on Canadian nationalism and identity – that is, how to reduce Canadian vulnerability to U.S. policies and actions. In the domestic field, the third option called for strengthening control over vital areas of the national interest in the economic and cultural spheres, while in foreign affairs it called for – guess what – an increased commitment to the rest of the world. This was our old friend multilateralism and globalism presenting itself in a new form – diversification of our economic relations with important countries other than the United States.

It was also our old friend presenting itself in a very old form – transatlanticism as a counterweight to continentalism.

Hence, whether we look at *Foreign Policy for Canadians* or at the third option, the principal actor in the play, the principal guest at dinner was the United States. The dominant concern remained the same – Canadian vulnerability to U.S. power and influence.

Moreover, our policy responses, in their essence, also remained the same: intensify the effort to build counterweights and accelerate the effort to establish deeper, more valuable relationships with the rest of the world – minus the United States.

If the vocabulary of these studies was somewhat different from what was characteristic of an earlier period, was there anything else that was different?

The answer is yes, but the differences are not easy to define.

1. There was very little will, in government, officialdom or business, to implement the diversification in our foreign relations prescribed by the third option. While the government was exhorting in favour of diversification, economic and trade relations with the U.S. were continuing to deepen. When the third option was proclaimed in 1973, our trade with the U.S. stood at around 60 per cent of our total exports; by 1984, when the Liberal government was defeated, it had reached over 75 per cent. The Contractual Link of 1976 notwithstanding, our trade with Europe declined in value by 50 per cent during the same period.