

area where functional pressure is driving the political agenda, this is probably it. Obviously, there is an inherent contradiction in a hemispheric-wide coalition ultimately established to resist the drive towards integration. However, given that liberalization is unlikely to be stopped, this coalition may expand and diversify its membership. In the current context, moreover, its mobilization to force a reassessment of the speed and modalities of the liberalization drive puts it very much in the same camp as most countries of the region. Dialogue with these organizations and sensitivity to their concerns should fit quite neatly with the North-South government-level dialogue that is needed for a sounder longer-term rapprochement with the region.

#### *Capacity-Building in Canada*

In the wake of Team Canada's disappointing harvest in Latin America, the issue of overblown expectations has come to the fore. Indeed, the overview presented in this paper suggests that the region has been badly oversold. The temptation will be strong to put it back where it does *not* belong: on the sidelines of Canada's foreign policy and on the desk of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). This should be avoided at all costs, and measures must be taken to avoid cycles of boom and bust in Canada's interest in the region. A key component of such a strategy has to be the deepening and widening of Canadian knowledge of and capacity on the region. The thinness of institutional memory regarding Latin America, both in government and outside, is striking. Similarly, expertise on the region, academic or otherwise, remains scarce: to point to a glaring gap, there are no first-rate specialists in Canada on the Brazilian economy, and only one published expert of its political system. Similar statements could be made, barely amended, on all other countries of South America. Mexico is the notable exception. But Canada will have to acquire expertise on Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, and Colombia in the next decade if it is to forge a long-term relationship with the region.

Talks about the third pillar of Canada's foreign policy—culture and education—must be supported by significant investments in the development of domestic capacity and by the establishment and consolidation of academic networks throughout the hemisphere. Some CIDA programs have contributed to this, but the Canadian capacity-building side of these programs sits awkwardly with the mandate of an aid agency. The current Foreign Minister and his predecessor have

indicated their desire to deepen Canada's domestic capacity, but talk has not been followed by requisite investments of resources.

#### CONCLUSION

The dream of an easy sail into the Americas is over, broken on the rocks of Latin America's lingering economic, social, and political problems and on the congenital limitations of multilateralism in James Monroe's hemisphere. An animal called hemispheric integration lives on, but it is hibernating now. The only success in recent years—a bilateral treaty with Chile—gave us access to a market that represented barely more than one-tenth of 1 per cent of Canada's exports in 1996.

The hemispheric option that Canada chose in 1989 and since then, however, still makes good sense. Canada has lots to gain and much to contribute in the consolidation of a regional community in the Americas. Significant progress was made at the beginning of the decade, but the somewhat lofty dreams of the early 1990s have to be abandoned. A number of challenges have emerged and opportunities for leadership abound, but they call for a more careful reading of the region's prospects, as well as more sensitivity to the preoccupations of the region's governments and peoples.

In Canada, exaggerated short-term expectations and a poor reading of the region's dynamics jeopardize the political basis of a hemispheric option. A long-term commitment to the region is required from the government. This commitment must be anchored in a strategic outlook that tackles the complexity of a dialogue with the region, engages civil society, and raises awareness and the level of Canadian knowledge about the region.

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