

relation. Because state/provincial relations are likely to increase rather than decrease in the future, it is as important to the states and provinces as it is to Washington and Ottawa that a balanced perspective be maintained in conducting and assessing these relations.

Canada and the United States

Federal-provincial dimensions of state-provincial relations

By Thomas Levy and Don Munton

It is surely one of the ironies of politics that spectacular but short-lived situations tend to obscure more significant, long-term developments. Examples bearing this out abound in the histories of most countries, and are certainly not lacking in recent Canadian external relations. Perhaps most notably one might recall the Quebec challenge and the constitutional debate over provincial treaty-making powers that dominated the headlines and preoccupied the policy community during the mid-1960s. And yet, while both the challenge and the debate have receded as the result of an implicit political consensus concerning federal-provincial "do's" and "don'ts", the involvement of virtually all ten provinces in international affairs has steadily, but less spectacularly, increased. That consensus may or may not unravel at some future point, but the underlying trend of greater provincial involvement shows no sign of abating or reversing.

It has become a simple fact that there are few aspects of Canadian external relations today that do not touch on provincial interests or manifest provincial activities, and this is particularly the case in Canada's most important international relations — those with the United States. The federal-provincial dimensions of Canadian-American relations are becoming more crucial not only to the continuance (or perhaps the emergence) of Canada as a distinct international actor but also to the survival of Canada as a federal state. The provinces have not always been so active, nor have their interests always been so engaged. Why, then, have these changes occurred? In this brief article, we shall attempt to survey some of the major factors we think account for these changes and to discuss some key aspects of the expanded involvement of the provinces.

The various factors that underlie the greater degree of provincial activity in external relations can, for the sake of simplicity, be divided into two groups. At the more basic level, there are what might be called the "background" factors. These include the greater prominence of economic and social issues on the national and international agenda, the increasing prosperity and complexity of Canadian society — brought about in large part by technological change, persisting regional social and economic differences, and increasing disparities in economic growth. These background factors can in part be linked to a number of intermediary or "political" factors. Included here would be the greater number and complexity of problems facing provincial governments, the expansion of provincial responsibilities and spending power, the growth in provincial bureaucracies and the relatively weakened position of successive minority Federal Gov-

The late Dr. Levy was Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of New Brunswick. Shortly after this article was written, he was killed in an automobile accident. Professor Levy had written extensively on the subject of Canadian federalism and foreign affairs. Dr. Munton is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and a member of the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University. His research interests include contemporary Canadian foreign policy, social science research methods, and approaches to forecasting in international politics. Professor Munton has written a number of articles discussing and applying quantitative analysis in the study of foreign policy behaviour. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors.